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*STEN RODHE*  
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STUDIES ON THE VEDIC IDEAS  
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BY

*STEN RODHE*

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C. W. K. GLEERUP

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## PREFACE

Professor, Teol. o. Fil. Dr E. BRIEM, Lund, led my studies in the history of comparative religion from their beginnings. He died this year just when he was on the point of giving this book a final examination before its publication. At this place I want to express my grateful appreciation for his never failing kindness and his keen interest in my work.

My thanks are further due especially to the following persons:

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## I.

# INTRODUCTION

The great scholars of the nineteenth century revealed the Vedic literature to us Westerners. The main parts of the Veda were printed in critical editions and translated into European languages, and a great many books were written, explaining and interpreting them. By and by the picture of the civilization of Vedic India was established. As Veda throughout is a religious literature, we got the fullest picture of the religion.

In the twentieth century the sensational excavations in the Indus valley have given a new impetus to the studies of the civilization of ancient India. Much has already been written on these finds. From a survey of the archæological results hitherto obtained I quote:<sup>1</sup> "The Indus valley had in the third millenium a highly evolved urban civilization, building of brick, using an abundance of metal — one season's work at Chanhudaro alone produced over 500 pieces of bronze (or copper) — equipped with a number of industries, and possessing a system of writing. The chronology of the civilization is luckily indicated by information from the west. Seals indubitably of Indus valley type and origin have been found in datable levels at Ur, Kish and Tell Asmar, and it is certain that they are of around 2750—2500 B. C. How long before that time and how long after we do not know. . . . As Dr Mackay has pointed out, the results of the American excavation at Chanhudaro,

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<sup>1</sup> W. N. BROWN, The beginnings of civilization in India, JAOS Suppl. 4 (1939) p. 34 f.

coupled with the reconnaissances of Mr. Majumdar, show that the Indus valley in early times had no less than four cultures, which can be put in relative relationship to one another. The earliest of the four is that which was first discovered at Amri and is now known at some fifteen sites. Above the Amri culture is that first discovered at Harappa, and best known from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, but fully represented at Chanhudaro and a great many other sites. It was the first of the four cultures to be discovered, for a number of years was the only one known, and is still considered to be the characteristic 'Indus civilization'. Above the Harappa culture is that first found at Jhukar, but most fully revealed by the excavations at Chanhudaro. The topmost of the four is that known at Jhangar, otherwise only at Chanhudaro."

For the study of the religion of ancient India the finds in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa afford most interesting material. It is a remarkable fact that these finds show many resemblances with later Hinduism. Figurines of a Mother Goddess have been found.<sup>2</sup> A three-faced man, seated in the position of a yogin and surrounded by animals, is supposed to be an early Śiva.<sup>3</sup> The large official bath and the many private bathrooms need not have any religious significance, but scholars<sup>4</sup> generally believe that they have, and the great importance of baths and purifications in Hinduism comes naturally to mind. As in Hinduism so in this ancient culture sexual symbols play an important rôle.<sup>5</sup>

As to the relations between this culture and the Veda,

<sup>2</sup> Mohenjo-daro and the Indus civilization, ed. by J. MARSHALL, I (1931) p. 49 ff; MODE, *Indische Frühkulturen* (1944) p. 15 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Mohenjo-daro p. 52 ff; GHOSH, Śiva — his pre-Aryan origins, IC 2 (1935—36) p. 763 ff.

<sup>4</sup> MARSHALL in Mohenjo-daro p. 75; MACKAY, *The Indus civilization* (1935) p. 19 f, 58 f, 85; PURI, *La civilisation de Mohenjo-daro* (1938) p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> Mohenjo-daro p. 58 ff.

scholars have very divergent opinions. Many scholars<sup>6</sup> deny every connection between these two civilizations, believing that the former was already extinguished when the Aryans entered India. As a matter of fact Vedic civilization is on essential points most dissimilar to that which has been excavated in the Indus valley. Thus e.g. the Indus culture had its centers in cities, while in the Veda we meet a country civilization with villages and cows as characteristics.

Other scholars try to establish some kind of relationship. Wholly unbelievable is the idea of SARUP,<sup>7</sup> that the Indus civilization represents a later period than RV of the cultural evolution in India. If there is any connection, it must be found the other way, in influence from the Indus culture on the Vedic one. The Aryans entered India probably at some time in the second millenium B. C.<sup>8</sup> No fixed dates have been obtained as yet. But in the second millenium large Indo-European movements took place in Western Asia.<sup>9</sup> We find e.g. Indo-European rulers in Mitanni in the middle of the millenium. Of special interest are the finds in Boghaz-köi, where gods with names similar to Vedic ones are mentioned in a treaty from about 1400 B. C. Scholars differ, however, in their opinions as to whether these gods are the gods of the early Iranians,<sup>10</sup> of the

<sup>6</sup> E.g. MARSHALL in Mohenjo-daro p. 110 ff; BLOCH, L'indo-aryen (1934) p. 322.

<sup>7</sup> The R̥gveda and Mohenjo-daro, IC 4 (1937—38) p. 149 ff.

<sup>8</sup> PATI, Is Indo-Aryan invasion a myth?, IHQ 4 (1928) p. 678 ff, and The Indo-Aryan invasion — a myth, IHQ 6 (1930) p. 513 ff, tries to vindicate that there has never been an Aryan invasion. Against him, THOMAS, The so-called Indo-Aryan invasion, IHQ 5 (1929) p. 248 ff, and VAIDYA, Indo-Aryan invasion of India — not a myth, ib. p. 253 ff, defend the ordinarily accepted view.

<sup>9</sup> CHILDE, The Aryans (1926) p. 16 ff; SCHMÖKEL, Die ersten Arier (1938) p. 20 ff; HROZNÝ, Die älteste Geschichte Vorderasiens (1940) p. 113 f.

<sup>10</sup> E. MEYER, Das erste Auftreten der Arier in der Geschichte, Sitz.ber. d. Kön. Preuss. Ak. d. Wis. 1908 p. 14 ff; OLDENBERG, On the antiquity of Vedic culture, JRAS 1909 p. 1095 ff; cf KEITH, The early history of the Indo-Iranians, Com. essays presented to R. G. Bhandarkar (1917) p. 88 ff.



Vedic Indians,<sup>11</sup> or of the undivided Aryans,<sup>12</sup> and the finds have not helped us towards any fixed dates of the Aryan invasion into India.<sup>13</sup>

Did the Aryan invaders meet the Indus civilization or something like it in India? To this important question we cannot give any definite answer as yet, neither yes nor no. It does not seem improbable, however, that the Indus civilization had a larger extension both in place and time than the excavations have hitherto revealed. In an archæological report from 1936<sup>14</sup> we read: "One of the main desiderata in Indian archæology is the systematic exploration of the mounds in the upper Gangetic basin with a view to trace the extension of the ancient culture at present mostly confined to the Indus Valley. A beginning was made this year in this direction by Dr. K. A. A. ANSARI, who visited some sites in the Dehra Dun, Bijnor and Saharanpur Districts of the United Provinces. Most of these appear to be of the late historical periods, but there is no doubt that the lower levels of some of the mounds will yield relics of an earlier period."

It seems wise not to leave out the possibility of influences from an Indian culture like that found in the Indus valley on the civilization of the Veda. The possibility of non-Aryan influences on Vedic culture has been considered even before the Indus excavations,<sup>15</sup> but we have now obtained a somewhat

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<sup>11</sup> JACOBI, On the antiquity of Vedic culture, JRAS 1909 p. 721 ff; KONOW, The Aryan gods of the Mitani people (1921) p. 3 ff.

<sup>12</sup> GILES, The Aryans, CHI 1 p. 72 f; PORZIG, Kleinasiatisch-indische Beziehungen, ZII 5 (1927) p. 265 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Notwithstanding the contrary assertions by HÜSING, Die Inder von Boghaz-köi, *Prace lingwistyczne ofiarowane J. Baudouinowi de Courtenay* (1921) p. 161 f.

<sup>14</sup> AIA 1936 (1938) p. 2. Cf AIA 1935 (1937) p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> See especially G. W. BROWN, The sources of Indian philosophical ideas, *Studies in honor of M. Bloomfield* (1920) p. 75 ff; SLATER, The Dravidian element in Indian culture (1924) passim. Accepting MARSHALL's opinion of the non-existing relations between the Indus culture and Veda,

better foundation for such hypotheses than the previous scholars who could only construct from later facts. Seeing the high standard of pre-Vedic India we cannot any longer speak of civilized Aryans conquering barbarian aborigines.<sup>16</sup> The Aryans may better be characterized as warring, "highly gifted and imaginative barbarians",<sup>17</sup> giving a fresh start to Indian culture. Among scholars who in this way regard Vedic culture as a beginning syncretism of pre-Aryan and Aryan elements may be mentioned CHATTERJI,<sup>18</sup> HUTTON,<sup>19</sup> SUR,<sup>20</sup> PRZYLUKSI<sup>21</sup> and SEMPER.<sup>22</sup>

Among the Vedic texts, RV is least affected by this syncretism. The question of the antiquity of RV has been much discussed. MÜLLER<sup>23</sup> supposed a "Chandas period" about 1200—1000 B. C. in which the hymns were composed and a "Mantra period" 1000—800, in which they were collected into a Samhitā, although admitting that these dates were most hypothetical.<sup>24</sup> By means of astronomical observations JACOBI<sup>25</sup> and TILAK<sup>26</sup>

GHOSE, Indo-Aryan literature (1934) passim, sees Vedic culture as a synthesis of Western Aryan and Eastern non-Aryan elements.

<sup>16</sup> This was the general view before the Indus excavations. See e.g. MASSON-OURSSEL, *Esquisse d'une histoire de la philosophie indienne* (1923) p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> CHATTERJI, The foundations of civilisation in India, *Tijdschrift v. h. Kon. Bat. Gen. v. Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 68 (1929) p. 70.

<sup>18</sup> Op. cit. p. 65 ff.

<sup>19</sup> In: *Census of India 1931 I.1* (1933) p. 366, 383, 457 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Pre-Aryan elements in Indian culture, *IHQ* 10 (1934) p. 14 ff.

<sup>21</sup> The three factors of Vedic culture, *IC* 1 (1934—35) p. 375 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Das Alter der Induskultur-Siedelung in Mohenjo-Daro, *OLZ* 41 (1938) col. 273 ff.

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. A history of ancient Sanskrit literature (1859) p. 70, 572.

<sup>24</sup> Lecture on the Vedas (1865) in *Selected essays II* (1881) p. 124.

<sup>25</sup> Über das Alter des Rig-Veda, *Festgruss an R. v. Roth* (1893) p. 68 ff, *Der vedische Kalender und das Alter des Veda*, *ZDMG* 49 (1895) p. 218 ff, *Nochmals über das Alter des Veda*, *ZDMG* 50 (1896) p. 69 ff.

<sup>26</sup> The Orion or Researches into the antiquity of the Vedas (1893), not accessible. Cf *The Arctic home in the Vedas* (1903) by the same author.

tried to reach more solid foundations for the fixing of dates. The former believed to find facts in the hymns pointing to dates between 4500 and 2500 B. C., the latter spoke of still earlier dates. The majority of scholars have not accepted their arguments,<sup>27</sup> and as WÜST has remarked,<sup>28</sup> their observations are not valid for more than single stanzas or lines. Even if, as many scholars maintain,<sup>29</sup> RV contains hymns and reminiscences from Aryan life outside India, it is generally assumed, certainly by right, that RV must be regarded as an Indian work.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, the main parts of it are not older than the Aryan invasion.<sup>31</sup> Evidently its hymns are of very varying ages. Attempts have been made to fix a relative chronology by means of statistical methods,<sup>32</sup> but it seems improbable that such methods should yield definite results.

The treatises of the religion reflected in the hymns of RV have dealt mainly with mythology. To the great pioneering scholars ROTH<sup>33</sup> and MÜLLER,<sup>34</sup> the hymns of RV were childish, simple songs of shepherds, worshipping the sky, the sun, and other natural phenomena as their gods. This interpretation of

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<sup>27</sup> See e. g. the criticism by OLDENBERG, *Der vedische Kalender und das Alter des Veda*, ZDMG 48 (1894) p. 629 ff, and *Noch einmal der vedische Kalender und das Alter des Veda*, ZDMG 49 (1895) p. 470 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Über das Alter des Rgveda, WZKM 34 (1927) p. 186 f.

<sup>29</sup> In rather fantastical ways BRUNNHOFER, *Urgeschichte der Arier I—III* (1893) and *Arische Urzeit* (1910), *passim*; TILAK, *The Arctic home*, *passim*. Further HILLEBRANDT, *Aus Alt- und Neuindien* (1922) p. 4 ff; WÜST *op. cit.* p. 187 ff; CHATTERJI *op. cit.* p. 75.

<sup>30</sup> Eagerly vindicated in e. g. FISCHER-GELDNER, *Vedische Studien I* (1889) p. XXII ff; VODSKOV, *Sjæledyrkelse og Naturdyrkelse* (1897) p. 67 ff.

<sup>31</sup> Quite fantastical dates for the hymns of RV are proposed in DAS, *Rgvedic culture* (1925) p. 1 ff. *Rgvedic India* (1921) by the same author has not been accessible.

<sup>32</sup> ARNOLD, *Vedic metre* (1905); WÜST, *Stilgeschichte und Chronologie des Rgveda* (1928); POUCHA, *Schichtung des Rgveda*, *Arch. Or.* 13 (1942) p. 103 ff, 225 ff.

<sup>33</sup> *Die höchsten Götter der arischen Völker*, ZDMG 6 (1852) p. 67 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Lectures on the origin and growth of religion* (1878), not accessible. Swed. transl.: *Religionens ursprung och utveckling* (1880) p. 172 ff.

the Vedic gods as natural phenomena has old traditions in Indian scholarship. In the same way, Indian commentators, whose authority as interpreters of RV ROTH on the whole despised,<sup>35</sup> see the sun, the moon, the thunderstorm, etc., as the essences of the gods of RV.<sup>36</sup> KUHN<sup>37</sup> treated the Vedic gods in the same way, and he and his followers excelled in comparative mythological studies, meaning to find a common Aryan religion of nature worship as the basis of Indian, Iranian, Greek, Roman, and German religion.

There could be no doubt that Agni is the fire, Sūrya the sun, etc. But for many gods the case is not so simple. Various natural phenomena were ascribed to Varuṇa, Indra and other gods, and the theory of a simple nature worship could not stand closer investigation. LUDWIG<sup>38</sup> maintained that the religion of the Vedic ṛsis had already passed the stage of a worship of natural phenomena and he compared it with Hebrew religion. A greater influence obtained the reaction of BERGAIGNE. He saw<sup>39</sup> that RV was not at all childish and simple but had a most complex character, and he stated that it was impossible not to take account of its liturgical function. Yet he did not want to abandon the traditional interpretation of the gods as representing natural phenomena. So he drew the conclusion that the sacrifice was an "imitation de certains phénomènes

<sup>35</sup> PW I p. IV f. The opinions on the value of Indian tradition, in the first place the commentaries of SĀYANA, for modern Vedic interpretation, have been most divergent. See e.g. FISCHER-GELDNER op. cit. I p. III ff; REGNAUD, *Le Rig-véda* (1892) p. 1 ff; GRIFFITH, *The hymns of the Rigveda* 2nd ed. I (1896) p. IX ff. SØRENSEN, *Til Spørgsmålet om Āditya'erne*, *Festskrift t. V. Thomsen* (1894) p. 340, expresses the opinion held by the majority of the scholars, when saying that SĀYANA is not a keen philologist, but a fairly respectable theologian.

<sup>36</sup> The classical Indian division of the gods knows three classes: the gods of the sky, those of the air, and those of the earth. Cf AV X. 9.12 and KEITH, *Indian mythology*, *Mythology of all races* 6 (1917) p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks* (1859) passim.

<sup>38</sup> *Der Rigveda* III (1878) p. 262 f.

<sup>39</sup> *La religion védique I—III* (1878—83) passim.

célestes. ... Les rites sont la reproduction réelle sur la terre des actes qui s'accomplissent dans le ciel."<sup>40</sup> The hymns belong to the liturgy, and the liturgy is necessary for upholding the course of nature. BERGAIGNE constructed a most learned system of masculine and feminine natural phenomena, having their counterparts in the sacrifice.

This system has not been accepted by later scholars, but the view of the RV hymns as complex liturgical hymns has proved an indisputable truth. It now became an important task to weigh against one another the liturgical and the naturalistic factors. BARTH<sup>41</sup> spoke of the preeminently sacerdotal character of the hymns, mainly clinging to the traditional interpretation, however. REGNAUD<sup>42</sup> brought the liturgical points of view to absurd extremes. VODSKOV<sup>43</sup> saw in RV a fight between a worship centered around man and his soul and a worship centered around natural phenomena. The former religion stresses the importance of the sacrifice, and its gods are Agni and Soma, just being fire and soma juice, and not any celestial phenomena. On this point VODSKOV was in opposition to BERGAIGNE. This sacrificial religion becomes victorious, and dominates the following religious evolution in India. The worship of nature is forced back, and RV is full of nature gods, who gradually lose their importance.

The results of the researches in the religion of RV of the nineteenth century were masterly collected by OLDENBERG.<sup>44</sup> His

<sup>40</sup> Op. cit. I p. VIII f.

<sup>41</sup> Les religions de l'Inde (1879—81), Oeuvres de Auguste Barth I (1914) p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> REGNAUD op. cit. Some examples may be given of his absurd interpretations: p. 144 ff *brahman* = "libation"; p. 161 ff *prthivī* = "la libation en tant que coulante et non enflammée"; p. 185 ff *ṛta* = "la libation en tant que mise en mouvement, coulée".

<sup>43</sup> VODSKOV op. cit. p. 12, and passim.

<sup>44</sup> Die Religion des Veda (1894). Two other works of the same collecting type appeared about the same time: HARDY, Die vedisch-brahmanische Periode (1893); HOPKINS, The religions of India (1895).

own contribution was mainly his use of comparative ethnology for the understanding of the primitive background.<sup>45</sup>

In this century the discussions on the religion of RV have continued mainly along the old lines but also other methods of interpretation have been tried. BLOOMFIELD especially has stressed the liturgical character of the hymns,<sup>46</sup> speaking, however, also a great deal about nature worship. DESHMUKH<sup>47</sup> writes that RV "represents a comparatively exalted form of a purer faith based on nature worship" and speaks of an evolution from a lofty nature worship to a hieratic religion centered around the sacrifice.<sup>48</sup> A reaction against the naturalistic interpretation is demonstrated by e.g. GÜNTERT,<sup>49</sup> HOCART and OTTO.<sup>50</sup> HOCART<sup>51</sup> vindicates that the ritualistic interpretation in the Brāhmaṇas is to be preferred to the modern naturalistic one, and finishes his dealing with India by saying:<sup>52</sup> "All we can at present suggest as regards India is that the gods in their earliest forms are concepts or ideas somewhat like the ideas of Plato, only studied from the purely practical point of view of agriculture, not for the more abstract purpose of exploring the foundations of human knowledge." As BERGAIGNE so MASSON-OURSSEL<sup>53</sup> tries to unite the naturalistic and ritualistic points of view: "Exégèse

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<sup>45</sup> Cf OLDENBERG, *Aus Indien und Iran* (1899) p. 55 ff and *Vedaforschung* (1905) p. 68.

<sup>46</sup> *The religion of the Veda* (1908) p. 63 ff and passim. Cf earlier by the same author: *Contributions to the interpretation of the Veda I*, JAOS 15 (1891) p. 144 f.

<sup>47</sup> *The origin and development of religion* (1933) p. 198. Cf p. 268, 317, etc.

<sup>48</sup> Two other general treatises dealing with the religion of RV in the ordinary way may be mentioned: GRISWOLD, *The religion of the R̥gveda* (1923); KEITH, *The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (1925).

<sup>49</sup> *Der arische Weltkönig* (1923) e. g. p. 38 f.

<sup>50</sup> *Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen* (1932) p. 125 ff.

<sup>51</sup> *Kingship* (1927) p. 207 ff.

<sup>52</sup> P. 230.

<sup>53</sup> *L'Inde antique* (1933) p. 147.

naturaliste d'antan, exégèse ritualiste plus récente en Europe, mais classique dans le Brahmanisme indigène, pourraient s'interpréter plus profondément comme aspects schématisés d'une réalité unique". BARNETT<sup>54</sup> has tried an euhemeristic method explaining e.g. Indra as an ancient deified king. To KONOW, the Vedic gods are powers, potencies, at work in nature as well as in human relations.<sup>55</sup> Varuna, whom I shall deal with more below in chapter III, has by SÖDERBLOM<sup>56</sup> been interpreted as formed after the model of man without any connections with natural phenomena. This idea — represented also by e.g. GÜNTERT<sup>57</sup> — is combined by HEIMANN<sup>58</sup> as "microcosmical" with the nature interpretation as "macrocosmical", and the combination of these two views is regarded as a typically Indian trait.<sup>59</sup>

The connections between RV and AV are close.<sup>60</sup> Many hymns appear in both collections. Yet the main character of the *Samhitās* differs. RV has a stamp of official solemnness, and,

<sup>54</sup> Hindu gods and heroes (1922) p. 31 ff. His view is accepted by CHARPENTIER e.g. in Indra, MO 25 (1931) p. 18 ff.

<sup>55</sup> Die Inder, Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte begründet von Chantepie de la Saussaye, 4. Aufl. II (1925) p. 21, 34.

<sup>56</sup> Gudstrons uppkomst (1914) p. 164 ff. Germ. transl.: Das Werden des Gottesglaubens (1916) p. 172 ff.

<sup>57</sup> GÜNTERT op. cit. p. 97 ff, esp. p. 117.

<sup>58</sup> Studien zur Eigenart indischen Denkens (1930) p. 23 ff.

<sup>59</sup> For the study of RV I have had good use of the handy translation by GRIFFITH, The hymns of the Rigveda, 2nd ed. (1896—97). I have also consulted the following German translations: GRASSMANN, Rig-Veda (1876—77), the whole RV; HILLEBRANDT, Lieder des Rgveda (1913), selected hymns; GELDNER, Der Rigveda (1923), maṇḍalas I—IV. All my quotations from Vedic texts are directly translated from the originals (for editions see Bibliography). As a rule I have not stated when my interpretations differ from the translations consulted.

<sup>60</sup> The *Sāmaveda Samhitā* need not be especially dealt with in the present study. The majority of its stanzas are found in RV, and the few new ones (translated in LUDWIG, Der Rigveda III p. 419 ff) do not give any new aspect to our subject.

on the whole, its hymns have liturgically their place in the great sacrifices.<sup>61</sup> AV consists mainly of charms and spells used to drive away disease and other evils in private life. The popular religion that it shows us may most probably be a mixture of Aryan and pre-Aryan beliefs. GHOSE<sup>62</sup> tries to vindicate that AV is the first, unwritten Samhitā, intended for the use of Aryan Brahmans in the non-Aryan Vrātya-country, but his constructions are very loosely founded. OLDENBERG<sup>63</sup> makes a sharp distinction between the existing AV and its content. The content has a primitive magical character and is older than RV, whereas the book is decidedly younger. DESHMUKH<sup>64</sup> protests against this view, claiming a spiritual evolution from RV, which according to him is free from all magic, to the magical AV. SCHERMAN<sup>65</sup> has treated the philosophical hymns of AV together with those of RV, and asserts (p. 92 f) that they have been composed in the same period as the early Upaniṣads. That AV cannot belong to a special period in the religious evolution has been clearly stated especially by BLOOMFIELD,<sup>66</sup> whose reaction against the too simply made divisions between various periods of Vedic religion ought to have been more widely followed than has been the case: "To mass the testimony of the AV at any one point, to speak, except for occasional convenience, of the period of the AV, seems an even

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<sup>61</sup> By right RV is called "a hymnbook for use at the hieratic ritual services" in EDGERTON, *The Upaniṣads: what do they seek and why?*, JAOS 49 (1929) p. 107. Cf ANDERSEN, *Livet efter Döden* (1915) p. 14.

<sup>62</sup> *Indo-Aryan literature* p. 84, 115 f.

<sup>63</sup> *Die Religion des Veda*, 2. Aufl. (1917) p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> DESHMUKH *op. cit.* p. 57 ff.

<sup>65</sup> *Philosophische Hymnen aus der R̥g- und Atharva-veda-samhitā* (1887). On the philosophical texts of AV cf also EDGERTON, *The philosophical material of the AtharvaVeda*, *Studies in honor of M. Bloomfield* (1920) p. 117 ff.

<sup>66</sup> *The Atharvaveda* (1899) p. 4. Cf BARTH, *Oeuvres* I p. 41. Contrary opinion e. g. in ARNOLD, *The R̥gVeda and AtharvaVeda*, JAOS 22 (1901) p. 309 ff.



more pernicious error than the bundling together of the facts of the so-called 'Rigvedic' period into one package, separate from all the rest of the early Brahmanic antiquity".<sup>67</sup>

RV and AV are more easy of access than YV, the liturgical formulas of which have mostly repelled scholars from close investigation. Many RV-stanzas return in these texts and are applied in a way that shows their secondary use, but on the other hand many formulas are very possibly as old as many RV-hymns. We cannot speak of any large cleft between the religion of RV and that of YV, as one of the foremost scholars, SCHROEDER, does when writing:<sup>68</sup> "Der Geist, der diese ganze weitschichtige Literatur der Yajurveden und der daran sich schliessenden Brähmana's beherrscht, ist so grundverschieden von demjenigen, der uns in so vielen Hymnen des R̥gveda erfrischt und erhebt, dass wir bald zu der Erkenntnis gelangen: Hier hat eine ganz neue Epoche des geistigen und socialen Lebens Platz gegriffen, die Art des Empfindens und Denkens ist in ihrem innersten Kerne eine andere geworden. Eine schwüle, dumpfe Luft weht uns aus diesen priesterlichen Werken entgegen; verschwunden ist der frische Hauch der über das Land der fünf Ströme dahinzog." As we have seen, the opinion of the simple freshness of RV has become much modified. So OLDENBERG cannot make the cleft so large, and he stresses that "für die Zeit des R̥gveda stellen ausdrückliche Zeugnisse die Existenz von Yajussprüchen fest".<sup>69</sup> Yet "im ganzen kommt eben in diesen Sprüchen eine verglichen mit der Blütezeit des vedischen Götterglaubens offenbar jüngeren Denkweise zu Wort."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> For the quotations from AV I have mostly accepted the translations in WHITNEY AV.

<sup>68</sup> *Indiens Literatur und Kultur* (1887) p. 92.

<sup>69</sup> *Die Religion des Veda*, 2. Aufl. p. 14.

<sup>70</sup> *Ib.* p. 15. — In the present study I have mostly used the *Saṃhitā* of the White Yajurveda, VS, translated by GRIFFITH, *The texts of the*

Like SCHROEDER in the quotation above, so most scholars treat YV together with the Brāhmaṇas. WEBER has been a pioneer in these studies.<sup>71</sup> MÜLLER<sup>72</sup> ascribes the Brāhmaṇa period to 800—600 B. C., but later scholars are inclined to more remote dates.<sup>73</sup> HILLEBRANDT, until now the best authority on Vedic rituals,<sup>74</sup> speaks of 1200—1000 as a more probable date.<sup>75</sup> With YV the Brāhmaṇas have shared the contempt of Western scholars. HOPKINS<sup>76</sup> uses such words as 'foolish', 'trash', 'confused jumble', when writing of them. Consequently they have been very superficially dealt with in the general works on Vedic religion, and there are not many treatises entirely devoted to them. LÉVI wrote *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas* (1898) and quoted many parallel texts from various Brāhmaṇas, thus showing that the contents of them are mainly identical. In *Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte* (1919) OLDENBERG tried to describe the curious way of thinking that dominates in the Brāhmaṇa age. His treatise does not deal much with the religious questions.

Nowadays the scholars of comparative religion are more interested in liturgy than earlier generations. A proof of this is BUSCHARDT, *Vṛtra* (1945), describing the fight between Indra and Vṛtra as a ritual fight taking place in the Soma sacrifice. BUSCHARDT stresses that often the content of the Brāhmaṇas seems to be as ancient as the oldest parts of RV, even though the Brāhmaṇas as complete works are younger (p. 8). As he

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White Yajurveda (1899). For the study of the Black Yajurveda I have consulted KEITH, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School* (1914).

<sup>71</sup> See especially *Indische Studien*, ed. by him 1850 ff.

<sup>72</sup> A history of ancient Sanskrit literature p. 445.

<sup>73</sup> Some keep to the dates of MÜLLER, e.g. KEITH, *The age of the Rigveda*, CHI 1 (1922) p. 112 f.

<sup>74</sup> See especially his *Ritual-litteratur* (1897).

<sup>75</sup> *Die Anschauungen über das Alter des Ṛgveda*, ZDMG 81 (1927) p. 73.

<sup>76</sup> *The religions of India* (1895) p. 176 ff. Cf MÜLLER op. cit. p. 389.

deals exclusively with the rôle played by Vṛtra in the Soma-sacrifice, his work has only a restricted importance.<sup>77</sup>

The Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads are often nothing but concluding parts of the Brāhmaṇas, but they are usually treated apart, which is certainly justified. Of them the Upaniṣads have the greater interest, the Āraṇyakas having the character either of Brāhmaṇa or Upaniṣad. The Western interpretations of the Upaniṣads have mainly followed the commentaries of ŚAMKARA, but it must be borne in mind that other Indian philosophers have been able to find support for differing philosophical systems in the same texts. Often evidently ŚAMKARA finds more of his own system in the Upaniṣads than these permit. The fact is that the Upaniṣads do not contain a fixed system but are full of contradictory statements. By DEUSSEN,<sup>78</sup> these contradictions are regarded as aberrations from the essential system, but this opinion has been rejected by the majority of scholars.<sup>79</sup> In contrast to the previous English translator GOUGH,<sup>80</sup> who likewise clings very closely to ŚAMKARA, DEUSSEN values the Upaniṣads immensely. He<sup>81</sup> finds in them the same ideas as in the West have been advanced by his revered teachers, KANT and SCHOPENHAUER.<sup>82</sup> Even on this matter his

<sup>77</sup> Also in the study of the Brāhmaṇas I have mainly kept to the White Yajurveda, and I have had much help from the translation by EGGELING, *The Satapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (1882—1900).

<sup>78</sup> AGP I.2 (1899) p. 358 and passim.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. EDGERTON, *Sources of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, JAOS 36 (1917) p. 197 ff; TUXEN, *De ældste Upanishader I* (1921) p. XVII f; DASGUPTA, *A history of Indian philosophy I* (1922) p. 41 f; RADHAKRISHNAN, *Indian philosophy I* 2nd ed. (1929) p. 139 ff.

<sup>80</sup> *The philosophy of the Upanishads* (1882).

<sup>81</sup> AGP I.2 p. 39.

<sup>82</sup> The words of SCHOPENHAUER on the *Oupnekhat* of DUPERRON are well known: "Es ist die belohnendeste und erhebendeste Lektüre, die (den Urtext ausgenommen) auf der Welt möglich ist: sie ist der Trost meines Lebens gewesen und wird der meines Sterbens sein." *Parerga und Paralipomena* II § 184, *Sämtliche Werke* VI (1939) p. 422.

views have on the whole been rejected. Other scholars<sup>83</sup> have found that the Upaniṣads must not be understood apart from Vedic religion and sacrifice. Especially HEIMANN<sup>84</sup> has been eager to show that the Indian way of thinking is in no way comparable to that of the West, in her reaction going further than most other scholars.

As to chronological questions, MÜLLER does not believe that there existed a "period of the Upaniṣads" in the evolution of Vedic religion, letting the "Brāhmaṇa period", 800—600 B. C., be succeeded by the "Sūtra period", 600—200 B. C.<sup>85</sup> DEUSSEN<sup>86</sup> tries to give a relative chronology which has been on the whole accepted. Evidently the texts have various ages, and not only the texts as such, but even the minor parts of them, which may have existed as loose memorial verses or tracts long before they were collected into Upaniṣads.<sup>87</sup> The oldest Upaniṣads, e. g. Brh., are inseparable from the Brāhmaṇas. The younger ones are free philosophical tracts, for which "Upaniṣad" has become a general term. Thus we have got a great number of Upaniṣads of varying character. Muktikā-upaniṣad mentions 108 of them,<sup>88</sup> DEUSSEN<sup>89</sup> has translated 60, but as the really canonical Upani-

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<sup>83</sup> E. g. OLDENBERG, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, (1915) p. 15; HILLE-BRANDT, *Aus Brāhmaṇas und Upaniṣaden* (1921) p. 1 ff; TUXEN op. cit. I p. XII ff.

<sup>84</sup> HEIMANN op. cit. passim. Cf her review of SENART, *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad* (1934), *JRAS* 1937 p. 501 ff.

<sup>85</sup> A history of ancient Sanskrit literature p. 244.

<sup>86</sup> AGP I. 2 p. 22 ff.

<sup>87</sup> BELVALKAR-RANADE, *History of Indian philosophy II* (1927) p. 90 ff, goes very far in the attempts to make a relative chronology even for the small parts of which the Upaniṣads consist.

<sup>88</sup> See DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upanishad's* (1897) p. 532 f. The number 108 returns often in India as a holy number. The rosary of the Vaiṣṇavas has 108 beads, see MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Brāhmaṇism and Hindūism* (1887) p. 117. In the legends on Buddha we hear of 108 Brahmins, see TUXEN, *Buddha* (1928) p. 51.

<sup>89</sup> DEUSSEN op. cit.

śads we need not count more than the 13, translated by HUME<sup>90</sup>: Brh., Chānd., Taitt., Ait., Kauṣ., Kena, Kāṭha, Īśā, Muṇḍ., Praśna, Māṇḍūkya, Śvet., Maitri. Among these especially the two last ones show many resemblances with Sāṃkhya and Buddhism.<sup>91</sup> Maitri is certainly later than Buddha,<sup>92</sup> and scholars generally hold this to be the case with Śvet., too.<sup>93</sup>

When the Upaniṣads have been regarded as a philosophical reaction against priestly Brahmanism, it has been natural to believe that they represent a kind of laymen's revolution. This view, set forth by DEUSSEN<sup>94</sup> and GARBE<sup>95</sup> and accepted by others,<sup>96</sup> is supported by the fact that in the Upaniṣads the Kṣatriyas often appear cleverer than the Brahmins. But it has been rejected by the majority of scholars.<sup>97</sup> The Upaniṣads are too closely knit to the Brāhmaṇas to permit any talk of revolution. All their important ideas have developed out of the Brāhmaṇas, where their roots can be seen. The whole Veda is evidently Brahmanical, composed and handed down by Brahmins. The fact that laymen play such an important rôle in the

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<sup>90</sup> The thirteen principal Upanishads (1921).

<sup>91</sup> On the relations between Kāṭha and Buddhism see e.g. OLDENBERG, *Buddha*, 8.—9. Aufl. (1921) p. 58 ff; CHARPENTIER, *Kāṭhaka Upaniṣad*, IA 57 (1928) p. 207; GLASENAPP, *Buddhism in the Kāṭhaka Upaniṣad?*, NIA 1 (1938—39) p. 138 ff.

<sup>92</sup> WEBER, Ak. Vorl. über indische Literaturgeschichte (1852), 2. Aufl. (1876) p. 106 ff; MACDONELL, *A history of Sanskrit literature* (1900) p. 230; OLDENBERG, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden* p. 205 f.

<sup>93</sup> OLDENBERG op.cit. p. 273; HAUSCHILD, *Die Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* (1927)-p. 76 f.

<sup>94</sup> AGP I. 2 p. 17 ff.

<sup>95</sup> *Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte* (1903) p. 3 ff.

<sup>96</sup> E.g. GRÖNBECH, *Indiske mystikere* (1925) p. 60 ff.

<sup>97</sup> E.g. OLTRAMARE, *L'histoire des idées théosophiques I* (1906) p. 64 ff; OLDENBERG op.cit. p. 166 ff; EDGERTON, *Sources of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, JAOS 36 (1917) p. 202; TUXEN, *De ældste Upanishader I* p. XII; LA VALLÉE-POUSSIN, *Indo-européens* (1924) p. 271 f; STRAUSS, *Indische Philosophie* (1925) p. 43 f; BELVALKAR-RANADE op.cit. p. 137; A. GEIGER, *Die indo-arische Gesellschaftsordnung* (1935) p. 74 ff.

Upaniṣads shows that the boundaries between the classes were not in all respects insurpassable.

The Upaniṣads are the Vedānta, the end of the Veda. With them the real *śruti* ends.<sup>98</sup> For the study of Vedic religion also the Sūtras, belonging to *smṛti*, are of importance. In this study I shall hardly refer to them, however, being mainly concerned only with the real "Veda". As to the age of the Sūtras, this is as difficult to decide as is that of other ancient Indian texts. MÜLLER dated the »Sūtra period« about 600—200 B. C.<sup>99</sup> We may take for granted, however, that many of the rules for the sacrifice and for the social life were valid long before they were collected into the existent Sūtras.

This short review of Vedic research, from the days of ROTH and MÜLLER until now, might have shown that the main interest of the scholars has been concentrated on the question of the historical development of the Vedic ideas.<sup>1</sup> They have tried to divide the Vedic age into different periods, answering to the different Vedic texts: a Rgvedic period, a Brāhmaṇa period, etc. Sometimes warning voices have been raised against this method, but on the whole it has dominated the research. Thus has been gained a view of the religious evolution in ancient India, harmonizing with the scheme of modern dogmatical evolutionism. Comparative ethnology has furnished the idea of the primitive beginnings, of which traces are found especially in AV. Then a time of worship of the powers of nature is supposed to have followed: the "Rgvedic age". After the priestly aberrations of the Brāhmaṇas, the philosophical religion of the Upaniṣads develops. The philosopher succeeds the priest.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Cf WINTERNITZ, Geschichte der indischen Litteratur I (1908) p. 50.

<sup>99</sup> See above p. 15.

<sup>1</sup> A contrary opinion has HÜSING, who in Die Inder von Boghaz-köi p. 152, accuses the Indianists of having too small an interest in history.

<sup>2</sup> For typical expressions of this view of Vedic religion see e.g. OLDENBERG, Aus Indien und Iran (1899) p. 59 ff, and Die Lehre der

In many kinds of research there is nowadays a reaction against the too simple solutions of evolutionism.<sup>3</sup> So the time has come to shake its hold even of Vedic research. There has, of course, been a development of ideas in the Vedic age, but it has not followed the simple course that is indicated by the various Vedic books or by the evolutionistic scheme. The different parts of the Veda are chronologically mixed with one another. The division between them is not mainly chronological but systematical: RV is the book of official hymns, AV contains texts belonging to private rites, YV contain formulas for the official ritual, the Brāhmaṇas are priestly commentaries to these rituals, the Upaniṣads are treatises intended for meditation, treating the sacrifice allegorically or completely abandoning it.

In order to get rid of the grip on Vedic research, held by dogmatical evolutionism, it seems useful, however, to treat the Vedic religion also from other aspects than that of the historical development of its ideas. In this book I shall try to deal with the Vedic religion as a structural whole.<sup>4</sup> As the framework of this structure I regard the system of various stages of life, *āśramas*. In its fully developed form,<sup>5</sup> which is not described in the proper Veda, this system prescribes that an orthodox Brahman life shall be divided into four stages, the names of which vary in different texts. After his second birth the young Brahman enters his discipleship, *brahmacarya*. Having learnt his Veda as a *brahmacārin*, he becomes a householder, *gṛhastha*. As such a one he shall fulfill his social duties, in first rank marry, beget sons and perform the sacrifices with

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Upanishaden p. 190; MACDONELL, A history of Sanskrit literature (1900) p. 29 ff, and Vedic religion, ERE 12 (1921) p. 601 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf WIDENGREN, Evolutionism and the problem of the origin of religion, Ethnos 10 (1945) p. 57 ff.

<sup>4</sup> DESHMUKH op. cit. p. 58 means that such a behaviour is a great error.

<sup>5</sup> Met with in the minor Upaniṣads, e. g. Jābāla 4, in the Dharmasūtras, e. g. Gautama III. 2, Vasiṣṭha VII. 1—2, etc.

which the *Samhitās* and *Brāhmaṇas* deal. After these two stages comes that of *vānaprastha*, forest-dweller, and finally that of *parivrājaka*, wanderer.<sup>6</sup> Other names for the Brahman in the last of these stages are e.g. *saṃnyāsīn*, ascetic, and *bhikṣu*, beggar. The two last stages are not clearly differentiated in the texts.<sup>7</sup> The stage of a forest-dweller may be regarded as a transition from the life of a householder to that of a hermit who abandons all worldly desires and interests, spending his time not with the fulfilling of familiar and sacrificial duties but with meditations and discussions of high spiritual topics.

This division of life must be the result of orthodox Brahmanical systematization.<sup>8</sup> To what extent it is intended to be a rule also for others than Brahmins is not altogether clear.<sup>9</sup> Even among the Brahmins themselves it was certainly mainly a theory, practised in its completeness only by a minority. But as a framework of the religious ideas it has been of immense importance during the whole history of India,<sup>10</sup> and it colours Hinduism even to-day.<sup>11</sup> It seems justifiable to regard it as a Brahmanical attempt to unite the interests of the social and ritual life with those of the meditative one. The origins of the

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<sup>6</sup> So the stages are called by Vasiṣṭha.

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. Gautama III.2 with the commentary of HARADATTA, translated in BÜHLER, *The sacred laws of the Āryas I* (1879) p. 190. DAVIDS, *Dialogues of the Buddha* (1899) p. 213 f, means that the difference between the two stages consists in the fact that the forest-dweller practises austerities, *tapas*, while the wanderer does not. Cf further DEUSSEN, *Āśrama*, ERE 2 (1909) p. 130, and, for similar circumstances related in the *Jātakas*, FICK, *Die sociale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddha's Zeit* (1897) p. 126 f.

<sup>8</sup> SCHROEDER op. cit. p. 205 f; HARDY op. cit. p. 212, etc.

<sup>9</sup> Cf e.g. SCHROEDER op. cit. p. 201 ff; DEUSSEN op. cit. p. 128 f.

<sup>10</sup> Cf e.g. A. GEIGER op. cit. p. 194 ff.

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. RADHAKRISHNAN, *Eastern religions and Western thought* (1939) p. 378 ff.



latter have been much discussed.<sup>12</sup> Also the possibility of an inheritance from the Indus culture has been proposed.<sup>13</sup> The Śiva figure in the position of a yogin, found at Mohenjo-daro, is a hint of the existence of the art of meditation in pre-Aryan India. A find of a head with the eyes directed to the top of the nose is another hint. Perhaps the *āśrama* system signifies the meeting between the life-loving invaders and the aborigines among whom there were people weary of life and intent on introspection. The love of life characteristic of the invaders obtained its place in the social stage of life, while the introspective speculations were given their due place in the last stage when the social duties had already been fulfilled.

In the Veda we see the *āśrama* system under development. The foundation of it is the contrast between the village, *grāma*, as the center of social life, and the wild forest, the jungle, *araṇya*, with its special forms of life.

In the ritual parts of the Veda we do not find much mention of this contrast. Even less the word *āśrama* appears. The words *grāma* and *araṇya* occur now and then, however. *Grāma* signifies a typical Indian settlement. When Wüstr<sup>14</sup> tries to show that certain Vedic hymns originate outside India, he means that a symptom of the higher age of these hymns is the fact that *grāma* is not mentioned in them. In RV the contrast between *grāma* and *araṇya* appears in the famous Puruṣa-hymn, X. 90, probably one of the youngest hymns in RV. There stanza 8 (= AV XIX. 6. 14) speaks of animals belonging to the forest (*āraṇya*), i. e. wild ones, and animals belonging to the village (*grāmya*), i. e. tame ones. Another well-known hymn from the tenth maṇḍala of RV, X. 146, is directed to a

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<sup>12</sup> See e.g. DEUSSEN, AGP I.2 p. 348; LA VALLEE-POUSSIN op.cit. p. 290 ff.

<sup>13</sup> CHANDA, Survival of the prehistoric civilisation of the Indus valley (1929) p. 25 ff. Contrary opinion, e.g. HAUER, Glaubensgeschichte der Indogermanen I (1937) p. 276 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Über das Alter des Rgveda, WZKM 34 (1927) p. 211.

female forest divinity, Aranyāni. In the first stanza the ṛṣi asks: "Why dost thou not seek our village (*grāma*)", and in st. 6 Aranyāni is called "the mother of the beasts (*mrga*)". In AV we find *grāma* and *aranya* side by side in XII. 1. 56, mentioned in a way that reminds one of the confessions of sin appearing in YV. Thus e. g. in VS XX. 17 we meet the expression "whatever sin we have committed in village (*grāma*) and in forest (*aranya*)" (cf below p. 154 ff). In TS that which comes from the village and that which comes from the forest are contrasted e. g. in V. 2. 9. 3: "That food, the curds (*dadhi*), is of the village (*grāmya*), honey (is) of the forest (*āraṇya*)".

Such mention of the word *aranya* does not tell us anything of a meditative life in the forest, however. Nor have the Samhitās much to say of such an ascetic life in other texts, not using the word *aranya*. The hymn RV X. 136, speaking of a *muni* may be mentioned, further the obscure Vrātya-hymns in AV XV.<sup>15</sup>

In the Brāhmaṇas the ideas dominating the forest stage of life are prepared in many ways, a fact which shall be dealt with below. Here I only want to mention a passage, which may be interpreted as a hint of a meditative stage of life. In ŚB XII. 4. 1. 1 it is said that people are delivered (*mucyante*) from the sacrificial duties not only by death (*mṛtyu*) but also by old age (*jarā*).

The Āraṇyakas are generally believed to have got their name from the fact that they were intended for the forest life of the hermit.<sup>16</sup> OLDENBERG, however, eagerly objects to this view.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For the interpretation of these hymns and of other texts more or less clearly speaking of similar phenomena, see HAUER, Die Anfänge der Yoga-Praxis (1922).

<sup>16</sup> MÜLLER, A history of ancient Sanskrit literature p. 313 f; JACOBI, Brāhmaṇism, ERE 2 (1909) p. 802; RADHAKRISHNAN, Indian philosophy I p. 65, etc.

<sup>17</sup> Zur Religion und Mythologie des Veda, NGG Phil. hist. Kl. 1915 p. 362 ff.

He means that they are called Āraṇyakas, because the teacher goes out to the forest with his disciples, when these texts are to be studied. Probably OLDENBERG is right. The essential forest-texts, the Upaniṣads, derive their name from *upa-ni-sīdati* "sit down with somebody to something", and the name seems mainly to indicate the sitting down of the disciples with their teacher.<sup>18</sup> This does not exclude, however, that Āraṇyakas as well as Upaniṣads are intended for the last, meditative stage of life, and that their names are intended to point in this direction, too. Perhaps OLDENBERG makes his opposition against the ordinary opinion more violent than there is need of. In the Vedic language names and appellations have most often not one, clearly definable sense, but are meant to give several associations. The Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads were taught in the disciple-stage, but were to be practised first in the hermit-stage. For this reason they were regarded as secret texts (*rahasya*).<sup>19</sup>

A good example of a play on the word *araṇya* is furnished by Chānd. VIII. 5. 4: "Only they who find those two seas, Ara and Ōya in the Brahman-world through the *brahmacarya* — only they possess that Brahman-world." Also the esoteric parts of the Veda are learnt in the discipleship, but their aims are reached first in the forest stage, which in the preceding passage is called *araṇyāyana*.

We find the contrast between a *grāma*-life and an *araṇya*-life clearly expressed e.g. in Chānd. V. 10. 1 ff. The hermits, living in the forest (*araṇya*), go to Brahman and are delivered from the feared return to this world.<sup>20</sup> Those, however, who live in the village (*grāma*), fulfilling their sacrificial duties, go to the moon from which they return to a new life on earth.

On the transition from village-life to forest-life we can read in Brh. IV. 5. 1—2 (cf Brh. II. 4. 1). There Yājñavalkya is said

<sup>18</sup> MÜLLER op. cit. p. 318 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf DEUSSEN, AGP I. 2 p. 4 ff, and Sechzig Upanishad's p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Cf Muṇḍ. I. 2. 11.

to be on the point of commencing another mode of life (*vr̥tta*) and he says to his wives: "I am about to wander forth (*pravr̥jiṣyan*) from this state (*sthāna*).” The word *sthāna* may mean nothing but "place", but also "stage of life". As usual it is very possible that the text intends a double association.

The verb meaning "wander forth" in this text, *pra-vrajaṭi*, returns in Br̥h. IV.4.22 in the name of the forest-dweller, *pravvr̥ājīn*: "On knowing him (Ātman) one becomes an ascetic (*muni*). Desiring him as their world, wanderers (*pravvr̥ājīn*) wander forth (*pravvr̥ajanti*).” The passage goes on with describing how men abandoned all desires and went away to live the life of beggars (*bhikṣācarya*).

The transition from the life as a disciple to that of a householder is illustrated in Taitt. I.11, where we find words used by the teacher when sending away a disciple into village life. Among these words there are admonitions to continue the string of generation (*prajātantu*), i. e. to beget sons, and to remember the duties towards gods and fathers, i. e. the sacrifices.

In Chānd. II.23 we find the stages of disciple, householder and hermit mentioned together, though not in their chronological order. "There are three branches of duty (*dharmaskandha*). Sacrifice, study, almsgiving — that is the first. Austerity (*tapas*), indeed, is the second. A *brahmacārin*, dwelling in the house of a teacher, is the third." The householder-stage is characterized by sacrifice, study and almsgiving, then comes the hermit-stage, characterized by austerity, and lastly the disciple-stage is mentioned. After the quoted words there follows an addition:<sup>21</sup> "settling himself permanently (*atyantam*) in the house of the teacher". These words seem to indicate the state of a *naiṣṭhika brahmacārin*, one who remains in the house of the teacher instead of going out to the householder-stage.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Excluded (after BOHTLINGK, *Khāndogjopanishad*, 1889, p. 22) in SENART, *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* (1930) p. 28.

<sup>22</sup> Cf DONATI, *Maestri e scolari nell'India brahmanica* (1888) p. 47 f.

Such a possibility is indicated even in the Sūtra-texts,<sup>23</sup> although the normal orthodox way remains the passing through the different stages.<sup>24</sup> After this mention of the three stages the Upaniṣad continues: "All these become possessors of good worlds. He who stands firm in Brahman attains freedom from death (*amṛtatva*)". These words have been interpreted so,<sup>25</sup> that they mean that the Brahman-knower stands outside the stages, just as in Śvet. VI. 21 he is called *atyāśramin*.<sup>26</sup> Later, the Brahman-knower should have been incorporated in the *āśrama* system as the top of it. There is, however, a possibility of understanding the text in another way. It may mean that just he who passes all stages is the one who stands firm in Brahman and attains salvation. As often in the Upaniṣads the meaning of the text is not quite clear, and every interpretation remains something of a construction.

Also the last words of Chānd. (VIII. 15) deserve to be quoted in this connection: "He who according to the rule has learned the Veda and returned from the house of his teacher, having done the due work for the teacher,<sup>27</sup> and in a house of his own (*kuṭumba*) continues his own study in a clean place and produces disciples; he who has concentrated all his senses upon Ātman; he who is harmless (*ahimsat*) towards all things elsewhere than at holy places — he, indeed, who lives thus throughout his life (*āyus*), reaches the Brahman-world and does not return again." In these words at the dismissal of a pupil we hear first how the pupil shall become a householder after leaving the teacher. In that stage he shall continue his studies and produce disciples (*dhārmika*, perhaps also sons characteriz-

<sup>23</sup> See JOLLY, *Recht und Sitte* (1896) p. 148.

<sup>24</sup> On the variations of the *āśrama* system see WINTERNITZ, *Zur Lehre von den Āśramas*, Festgabe H. Jacobi (1926) p. 215 ff.

<sup>25</sup> DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upanishad's* p. 97, and AGP I. 2 p. 57; WINTERNITZ op. cit. p. 217. This interpretation is in accordance with ŚĀMKAARA.

<sup>26</sup> Cf STRAUSS op. cit. p. 69.

<sup>27</sup> The text is here somewhat obscure. See SENART op. cit. p. 121.

ed by *dharma*). After that we hear of the duty of concentrating all senses on Ātman, and this may be an allusion to the last stage of life.<sup>28</sup> For the whole life *ahimsā* is a rule, but exception is made for the sacrifices due in the social stage of life. He who lives thus his whole life according to orthodox rule, reaches the Brahman-world, i. e. gains final salvation.<sup>29</sup> He is delivered from that which in the Upaniṣads is regarded as a great evil: returning after death to a new life on earth.

In this book I shall treat Vedic religion with special attention fixed on the importance of the division between a social life in the village and a meditative life in the forest, the division on which the *āśrama* system is built. We shall see that this aspect is prolific for the study of Vedic religion in its very centre, the question of salvation. As a rule the treatises on Vedic religion deal mainly with mythology (for RV) or with philosophy (for the Upaniṣads). More central in religion is the idea of salvation. The question of salvation must not be treated only as a part of philosophy, as does e. g. DEUSSEN, when he divides his book on the philosophy of the Upaniṣads<sup>30</sup> into the following four parts: 1) Theology or the doctrine of Brahman, 2) Cosmology or the doctrine of the universe, 3) Psychology or the doctrine of the soul, 4) Eschatology or the doctrine of transmigration and salvation and the way thither.

Salvation, *mokṣa*, *mukti*,<sup>31</sup> is a fundamental conception of all

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<sup>28</sup> DEUSSEN, AGP I.2 p. 333 and Āśrama, ERE 2 p. 130, means that Chānd. VIII.15 speaks only of the *gr̥hastha*.

<sup>29</sup> STRAUSS op.cit. p. 57, 61, regards this acceptance of the social life as an aberration from the central teachings of the Upaniṣads. But many statements in the Upaniṣads seem to show that the social stage of life is regarded as a normal precursor of the meditative one. Some have already been quoted. Perhaps *parāvāra*, the higher and the lower, in Muṇḍ. I.1.2, II.2.8 may be interpreted in this way. Cf also Īśā 9—11, treated below p. 165 f.

<sup>30</sup> AGP I.2.

<sup>31</sup> Often used with prefixes: *ati-*, *vi-*, etc. Cf below.

Indian religions, as it may be said to be a fundamental conception of every religion.<sup>32</sup> Salvation, deliverance, release, such words say nothing in themselves, however. Everything depends on the sense given to the evil from which man seeks deliverance, and to the good he wants to obtain. Now in Hinduism salvation means deliverance from *samsāra*, the cycle of existence, and *mokṣa* implies the very definite sense of deliverance from this kind of evil. When this evil does not appear we do not hear of *mokṣa*. Consequently in the treatises of Vedic religion salvation is dealt with only in connection with the Upaniṣads, and there as the final goal of life.

It does not seem justifiable, however, to speak of salvation only when the evil to be delivered from is the cycle of existence. In the ritual parts of the Veda other things are regarded as evil. In these texts, however, the terms *mokṣa*, *mukti* hardly appear,<sup>33</sup> but they are not frequent in the Upaniṣads either. Research in the Vedic ideas of salvation must not be restricted to these terms. Betty HEIMANN<sup>34</sup> has stressed the fact that Indian terms must always be studied together with the verbs from which they are derived. Applying this rule to the present study, we must observe the use of the verb *muñcati*.<sup>35</sup> And this verb occurs in all parts of the Veda.

On the root *muṣ* GRASSMANN WB col. 1047 writes: "Die Bedeutungsentwicklung unserer Wurzel liegt in RV klar vor. Als Grundbedeutung tritt überall hervor: 'losmachen, losbinden', nämlich jemand von Stricken, Banden freimachen, oder die

<sup>32</sup> Cf TAESCHNER, Der Erlösungsgedanke in der Religionsgeschichte, Morgenland 28 (1906) p. 1 ff.

<sup>33</sup> *Atimukti* appears in ŚB II.3.3.9.

<sup>34</sup> Deutung und Bedeutung indischer Terminologie, Atti d. XIX Congr. Intern. d. Orientalisti 1935 p. 285 f.

<sup>35</sup> There is something, but not very much, of this in DAVIDS, Mokṣa, ERE 8 (1915) p. 770 ff, and GEDEN, Salvation (Hindu), ERE 11 (1920) p. 182 ff. As a rule *mokṣa* is dealt with as a state of being, not as the actual deliverance from evil. So e.g. DASGUPTA, A history of Indian philosophy I p. 58; SIRCAR, Hindu mysticism (1934) p. 321 ff.

Stricke, Bande von ihm losmachen, lösen; in beiden Fügungen wird es dann übertragen auf Befreiung von allerlei Hemmungen und Bedrängnissen, wobei das ursprüngliche Bildliche oft deutlich hervortritt." The verb is constructed with ablative and accusative. As GRASSMANN indicates there is no difference of sense between the construction: deliver someone (acc.) from something (abl.), and release something (acc.) from someone (abl.).

Further we observe that *muñcati* is used with various prefixes without any change of sense: *nis-*, *pra-*, *vi-*, etc. The sense is throughout loosen, release, deliver, with the exception that the prefix *prati-* gives the opposite sense: "fasten, bind". This contrast is not sufficiently clearly indicated by GRASSMANN. As I shall show in the next chapter the texts often use *muñcati* when speaking of loosening fetters (*pāśa*) of some kind. How *prati-* gives the verb directly the opposite sense is shown in RV VII. 59. 8: "May he be fettered (*prati-mucīṣṭa*) in the snares (*pāśa*, acc.) of Druh". In AV this sense is still clearer, e. g. AV V. 14. 3: "Fasten (*prati-muñcata*), O gods, the witchcraft (*kṛtyā*) on the witchcraft-maker (*kṛtyākṛt*), like a necklace". A good example of the contrast between *pra-muñcati* and *prati-muñcati* is given in TS III. 1. 4. 4: "May Aditi loosen (*pramumoktu*) this snare (*pāśa*). I pay homage to the cattle (*paśu*), to the lord of cattle (*paśupati*). I cast down the enemy (*arāṭiyat*), I fasten (*prati-muñcāmi*) the snare on him whom we hate."

*Muñcati* is sometimes used in connection with things that have nothing to do with evil. The verb may then express the loosening of horses. The fetter from which the horse shall be released can be either the one that keeps it from starting with its chariot, e. g. RV III. 53. 11 of the horse of Sudās and RV V. 62. 1 of the horses of Sūrya, or the one that keeps it to its chariot, e. g. RV I. 171. 1, where the Maruts are prayed to loosen their horses and abide with the sacrificer, and RV X. 160. 1 where a similar prayer is directed to Indra. In the majority



of texts containing some form of *muñcati*, however, we have to do with evil of some kind from which the ṛṣi wants to be delivered. These various evils will be reviewed in the following chapters. But in the Veda *muñcati* has not so special a use that it is possible to restrict a research on the Vedic ideas of deliverance from evil to the texts containing this verb. Many other verbs may be used in the same sense: *śrathayati*, *srjati*, etc. Owing to the fact that *muñcati* has later become the main verb for deliver, getting the important derivations *mukṭi*, *mokṣa*, I shall give special attention to the passages containing it, however, although also observing other texts.

Consequently, my task will be to examine the words appearing together with *muñcati* and other verbs for deliver. The ideas of salvation will in this way be studied from the negative aspect: the evil from which deliverance is sought. The other sides of the question of salvation: the good that is wanted and the way that is believed to bring the worshipper from evil to good, will be treated only so much as the main subject of the treatise demands.

With necessity this study will become a study of words. There is no other way to an understanding of the Vedic ideas of salvation than by examination of the words used in the texts speaking of such things. The study of single words is more important in Indian religions than elsewhere. I need not spend any words on the immense importance attached in the Indian tradition from oldest time to the questions of language. I only refer to Betty HEIMANN who is perfectly right when saying: "Sprachprobleme sind in Indien Weltanschauungsfragen."<sup>36</sup>

The task I have given myself can also be briefly expressed in the following way. All people in all religions can use the well-known Christian prayer: deliver us from evil. Christians praying thus may have very different things in their minds. An examination of what they mean by evil and deliverance

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<sup>36</sup> HEIMANN op. cit. p. 284.

from evil would show us much of the contents of Christianity. In the same way the examination of what is meant in other religions by these words informs us of essential characteristics of these religions. Putting the same central question to various religions in this way seems to be the best method of a comparative study. But before a comparative study is attempted we must treat the religions apart, trying to find their answers to our questions.

What is regarded as evil in the Veda? From what kinds of evil is deliverance sought? These are the questions that I shall try to answer in the following chapters.

## II.

# GENERAL EXPRESSIONS

The classical Sanskrit word for evil is *pāpa*. In Pāli the word is unaltered, and the holy texts of Buddhism often speak of *pāpa* in the sense of wrong-doing, sin.<sup>1</sup> Interpreting the various words for evil in the Veda, ŚĀYANA frequently uses *pāpa* as a gloss.<sup>2</sup> But in the Vedic texts themselves, *pāpa* is not very frequent, having no established place in the religious terminology. To a certain degree this may be said, however, of the derivated *pāpman*, which appears rather frequently in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads.

The word *pāpa* itself does not tell us anything of any special kind of evil. Its etymology is rather uncertain. WALDE-POKORNY<sup>3</sup> combines it with Gr. πῆμα, calamity, Lat. *penuria*, want, but even this does not give us much.

More important it is to examine the use of the word in the texts. In RV we find that *pāpa* has usually a moral sense. It characterizes people as evil-minded. This is the case e. g. in the obscure Agni-hymn RV IV. 5. In stanza 5 the ṛṣi speaks of lustful women who betray their husbands and who are *dureva*, *pāpa*, *anṛta*, *asatya*, which words GRIFFITH<sup>4</sup> translates with "of evil conduct, full of sin, untrue, unfaithful».

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<sup>1</sup> E. g. Dhammapada 183.

<sup>2</sup> E. g. RV II. 29. 5 (*āgas* and *agha*), RV IV. 12. 6 (*amhas*).

<sup>3</sup> II p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> The hymns of the Rigveda, 2nd ed. I (1896) p. 401.

In RV VIII. 61. 11<sup>5</sup> we meet *pāpa* in a similar sense: "We are not counted as evil (*pāpa*), nor as godless (*arāya*) and foolish (*jadhu*), when with the Soma juice we make the mighty Indra our friend." The translations of the words parallel to *pāpa*: *arāya* and *jadhu*<sup>6</sup> are fairly arbitrary, as these words are not found anywhere else. *Arāya*, however, is connected with *arāti*, *arāvan*, etc., reviewed in the next chapter, which words express evil things and creatures of a demonical character. The etymology seems to imply a sense of "not giving".<sup>7</sup> The feminine *arāyī* appears sometimes as a female demon.

Used in a clearly ethical sense we find *pāpa* in the famous dialogue RV X. 10 (cf AV XVIII. 1. 1—16). Yamī tries to persuade her brother to engage in sexual intercourse, but he refuses. He draws her attention to the law (*dhāman*) of Mitra and Varuṇa and says in st. 12 (cf AV XVIII. 1. 14): "They call him evil (*pāpa*) who approaches his sister."

In RV VIII. 19 we find a form *pāpayā* together with a form of the derivation *pāpatva*. The hymn is a long prayer to Agni for wealth and for protection against different kinds of evil. In st. 25 f the ṛṣi says: "Agni, if thou wert mortal (*martya*) and I were immortal (*amartya*), thou great as Mitra, Son of Strength, worshipped with our gifts, I would not give thee up, Vasu, to calumny (*abhiśasti*), nor to misery (*pāpatva*), O Bounteous One. My worshipper would not be living in want (*amatīvan*), nor in distress (*durhita*), nor in evil (*pāpayā*), O Agni."<sup>8</sup> The form *pāpayā* is explained by PW IV col. 659 and GRASSMANN WB col. 806 as an instr. fem., used as an adverb. The sense is general: in an evil way. SĀYANA glosses the form

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes e. g. in GRIFFITH op. cit. II p. 202 f counted as RV VIII. 50, owing to the exclusion of the Vāḥkilya-hymns RV VIII. 49—59.

<sup>6</sup> OLDENBERG, R̥gveda. Textkritische und exegetische Noten II (1912) p. 124: "*jalhavaḥ* dunkel". GRASSMANN WB col. 466: "stumpfsinnig".

<sup>7</sup> GRASSMANN WB col. 104 f.

<sup>8</sup> Parallels to this way of praying to a god are found e. g. in RV VII. 32. 18 f and RV VIII. 14. 1 f, where the prayers are directed to Indra.

with *asobhanayā buddhyā*, “with a vicious mind”, which is in accordance with such passages with *pāpa* as have been quoted above. With the same words, *asobhanā buddhiḥ*, in the same line he glosses *amati* in *amatīvā* (padapāṭha: *amati-vā*).<sup>9</sup> GRIFFITH<sup>10</sup> translates “live in sin”, and comments “such as neglect of the Gods in consequence of poverty”, evidently meaning that *pāpayā* expresses the consequence of *amatīvā*, which he renders with “feel hunger”. — As usual we find the ṛṣis playing on words. The form *pāpayā* is chosen in order to correlate as well with the dat. neutr. *pāpatvāya* as with the nom. masc. *amatīvā*. As to the sense, both *pāpatvāya* and *pāpayā* are best understood as being of no difference in the general sense of “evil, misery”.<sup>11</sup> The translation “sin” should be used with greater carefulness than is the case with GRIFFITH, who translates also other words for evil too easily with “sin”.<sup>12</sup> This translation ought to be reserved for those texts where we may safely infer a sense of wrong-doing, and that is not the case here. But on the other hand, in the Veda sin is not regarded as an evil quite different from other kinds of evil. This subject will be dealt with further in chapter VI, below.

In the RV-hymns quoted we have met *pāpa* as an expression for something evil, mostly used adjectively in an ethical sense. We have not heard anything in these hymns of deliverance from *pāpa*. To find this combination we must go to AV, where in X. 1. 11 we read: “In that they have taken the name of thee giving to the Fathers, or at the sacrifice — let these plants free (*muñcantu*) thee from all ill (*pāpa*) that is designed (? , *sam-deśya*).”<sup>13</sup> The hymn is to protect against hostile witchcraft, and in stanzas 10 and 11 *pāpa* indicates various forms thereof.

<sup>9</sup> On *amati* see below p. 476.

<sup>10</sup> GRIFFITH op. cit. II p. 147.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. OLDENBERG, Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmana-Texte (1919) p. 190.

<sup>12</sup> E. g. *agha* in RV I. 97 passim (GRIFFITH op. cit. I p. 126 f.).

<sup>13</sup> Translation, even the ?, from WHITNEY AV p. 564.

The important derivation *pāpman* does not appear in RV, but we find it in several AV-hymns. In AV III.31 the refrain speaks of deliverance from *pāpman*, although there is no verb like *muñcati*, only a *vi*, away. "I deliver you from all evil (*vi-aham sarveṇa pāpmanā*), from the sickness (*vi-yakṣmena*), I give you life (*saṁ-āyusā*)."<sup>14</sup> Here *pāpman* has sickness as its parallel, giving it a wider meaning. The disease may be caused by sin or by hostile curse, and it may end in death. All these things can be comprised in *pāpman*.<sup>14</sup> They are enemies of life, *āyus*, a word that is often met with as the contrast of evil. Life is good, everything that threatens it is evil, *pāpman*.

In another AV-hymn, VI.26.1., the prayer is directed to the personified Evil: "Deliver (*ava-sṛja*) me, Evil (*pāpman*), Mighty One, vouchsafe upon us. Put me, Evil, unhurt in the world of happiness (*bhadra*)."<sup>15</sup> With this stanza, where Evil is met with as a kind of god or demon, may be compared AV XI.8.19, where gods by the name of *pāpman* are mentioned.<sup>15</sup>

In VS we find *pāpman* used in a most general sense. In VS IX.4 it is said to the Soma-cups: "Deliver (*vi-prñktam*, separate) me from evil (*pāpman*)", without any specifications. The opposite of *pāpman* is *bhadra*, good. In VS XII.99 a plant is believed to be able to conquer (*sahasva*) *pāpman*, the context speaking of disease and of enemies, which kinds of evil evidently are comprised in *pāpman*.

In ŚB we find *pāpa* used in the sense of "wrong-doing", in the same way as in RV. In ŚB I.6.1.21 we hear that he who has the right knowledge (*ya evam etad veda*) shall not be put outside the sacrifice even if he commits (*karoti*) great evil (*pāpa*). The word *pāpman* is frequent in ŚB. We meet it together with various kinds of evil: with *enas*, sin, in IV.4.5.5, with *śuc*, sorrow, in VII.5.2.28 ff, with *sapatna*, rival, in VIII.

<sup>14</sup> In AV XVII.1.29 *pāpman* appears together with *mṛtyu*, death.

<sup>15</sup> ELIOT, *Hinduism and Buddhism I* (1921) p. 101 f, believes that the worship of evil powers was an un-Aryan habit, the Aryans worshipping only good powers, a hypothesis which lacks solid foundation.

5.1.6 f, with *nirṛti*, destruction, in VII.2.1.15, with *mṛtyu*, death, in VIII.4.2.1 ff, etc. Together with a characteristic metaphor, appearing in various Vedic texts, *pāpman* is used with *muñcati* in ŚB II.5.2.47: "Even as a snake is delivered (*nis-mucyeta*) from his skin, so is he delivered (*nis-mucyate*) from all evil (*pāpman*)". As here *pāpman* alludes to the Avabhṛtha, the expiatory bath (cf below p. 155 ff), our thoughts are led to sins as the evil from which the sacrificer is delivered. When the same expression is used in ŚB II.3.1.6, however, *pāpman* is said to be *rātri*, night, as the text deals with the Agnihotra, which is offered after sunset and before sunrise. In ŚB XI.2.6.13, too, we meet the same metaphor with the snake, and there *pāpman* is said to be the mortal body (*martya śarīra*). We see how *pāpman* is able to signify various kinds of evil.

Also in the Upaniṣads we find *pāpa* constructed with *karoti*, consequently having the sense of wrong-doing (Brh. IV.4.5, IV.4.22, V.14.8, Chānd. IV.11—14, Taitt. II.9.1, Kauṣ. II.7, III.1). As its contrast often *punya*, good, is mentioned (Brh. I.5.20, III.2.13, IV.3.15, IV.4.5, Muṇḍ. III.1.3, Praśna III.7), also *kalyāna* (Brh. IV.4.22) and *sādhu* (Brh. IV.4.5, Taitt. II.9.1). It does not appear with *muñcati*, but there are passages speaking of shaking off, etc. evil or evil works, e.g. Chānd. VIII.13.1.

In the Upaniṣads not only the evil works are said to be cast off, but all kinds of work, good as well as evil ones. So Muṇḍ. III.1.3 says that the wise man "shaking off (*vidhūya*) good and evil (*punya-pāpe*)" reaches salvation. When the texts deal with salvation both *punya* and *pāpa* are evil, *pāpman*, from which the wise man is delivered. There is in this way a definite difference in the uses of *pāpa* and *pāpman*, a difference on the whole in accordance with the practice in the Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas. *Pāpman* does not as *pāpa* signify an evil work, although comprising also this kind of evil.<sup>16</sup> It does

<sup>16</sup> Consequently it is not good as HUME in his index (The thirteen

not appear with *karoti*, and is not contrasted to *punya*. A significant contrast of it is *ānanda*, bliss, in Bṛh. IV. 3. 9.

As in the Brāhmaṇas, *pāpman* may in the Upaniṣads indicate various evils. Of the evil that is death (*pāpman mṛtyu*) we read in Bṛh. I. 3. 10, I. 5. 23. In Chānd. VIII. 4. 1 the Brahman-world is said to be delivered from evil (*apahata-pāpman*), and the evils are exemplified as follows: day and night, old age (*jarū*), death (*mṛtyu*), sorrow (*śoka*), good work (*sukṛta*), evil work (*duṣkṛta*). Here the whole life and everything characteristic of it, including good and evil works, is regarded as an evil, *pāpman*, which disappears in the Brahman-world.

To express the deliverance from evil various verbs are used. In the last example we found *apa-hanti*, beat. Together with *pāpman* the same verb is met with in Bṛh. I. 3. 10, Kauṣ. IV. 20, Kena 34. In Bṛh. IV. 3. 8 *sam-sṛjati* and *vi-jahāti* express deliverance from *pāpman*. Sometimes the verb is chosen to play on a word in the context. When Bṛh. I. 4. 1 speaks of *puruṣa* it says that he has burned (*auśat*) all evils (*pāpman*, plur.). Bṛh. V. 7. 1 declares that Brahman is lightning (*vidyut*) and that lightning delivers (*vi-dyati*) him from evil (*pāpman*) who knows this.

Only once in the principal Upaniṣads do we find the deliverance from *pāpman* expressed with a form of *muñcati*. It is in Praśna V. 5 in connection with the same metaphor of the snake as has been met with above. The passage speaks of the wise man who by means of the meditation on *Om* reaches salvation. He is "delivered from evil (*pāpmanā vinis-mukta*) as a snake is delivered (*vinis-mucyate*) from its skin". If we compare this passage with Praśna III. 7, we obtain a good illustration of the different uses of *pāpa* and *pāpman*. Praśna III. 7 speaks of how in consequence of good (*punya*) one goes to the good world, in consequence of evil (*pāpa*) to the evil world, but in

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principal Upanishads p. 511) and often in his translations, to render *pāpa* with "evil", *pāpman* with "sin".



consequence of both to the world of men. This world of men, to which *pāpa* as well as *punya* lead, is the *pāpman*, from which deliverance is promised in other texts. But although even good may be an evil to be delivered from, the texts know a distinction between good and evil works. To this distinction I shall return below p. 168 ff.

Not together, but in the neighbourhood of one another *pāpman* and *muñcati* occur in Muṇḍ. III. 2. 9. The wise man “crosses over (*tarati*) sorrow (*śoka*), crosses over evil (*pāpman*). Delivered (*vi-mukta*) from the knots of the heart he becomes free from death”. If we compare this verse with Muṇḍ. III. 1. 3, quoted above p. 34, we find the same difference of use of *pāpa* and *pāpman* as in the quoted examples from Praśna.<sup>17</sup>

Thus we have seen how *pāpa* and *pāpman* are used throughout the Veda in order to indicate various evils. As a rule *pāpa* is used adjectively, characterizing an evil-minded man or woman or an evil deed. *Pāpman* is a noun that comprises all sorts of evils. It never appears in RV but is fairly frequent in the other Saṃhitās, in the Brāhmaṇas and in the Upaniṣads. The words do not themselves indicate any special kinds of evil, just meaning “evil”. Especially *pāpman* thus gets a most varying content in various contexts. In the ritual texts, belonging to the social stage of life, it indicates disease, death, and other evils threatening life, in the texts belonging to the forest stage of life it indicates life and all sorts of work fettering man in life, good as well as evil ones. In both kinds of texts, however, deliverance from evil is wanted. To express the idea of deliverance, various verbs are used, *muñcati* as well as others. There is no fixed terminology on this subject.

The ancient ṛṣis attaching great importance to similarities of words and sounds, it may be more than an accident that often they express the evil from which they seek deliverance, with

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<sup>17</sup> Cf also Taitt. II. 9. 1.

a word similar to *pāpa*: *pāśa*,<sup>18</sup> "snare, bond, fetter". In RV this conception is especially connected with Varuṇa. With one exception all RV-stanzas speaking of *pāśa* deal with Varuṇa.<sup>19</sup> This exception is RV V. 2. 7, where Agni is said to have loosened (*amuñcaḥ*) Śunaḥśepa from his post, and the ṛṣi prays that Agni may loosen (*vi-mumugdhit*) his own bonds (*pāśa*) in the same way.

RV I. 24, also dealing with Śunaḥśepa,<sup>20</sup> has Varuṇa as its god, however. In RV I. 24. 12—13 we read: "May he to whom the fettered Śunaḥśepa prayed, King Varuṇa, deliver (*mumoktu*) us. Bound to three pillars the seized Śunaḥśepa prayed to the Āditya. May King Varuṇa, wise, never deceived, deliver (*ava-sarjyāt*) him, loosen (*vi-mumoktu*) the bonds (*pāśa*)." A following stanza, 15, of the same hymn, speaks of three bonds:<sup>21</sup> "Varuṇa, loosen (*ud-, ava-, vi-śrathāya*) from us the bond (*pāśa*) above, the one below, the one between. Then may we be sinless (*anūgas*) to Aditi in thy law (*vrata*), O Āditya."<sup>22</sup> Here we meet a word for sin, *āgas*, in the same stanza as *pāśa*. The fetters from which the ṛṣis want to be delivered certainly as a rule consist of disease and similar physical evils.<sup>23</sup> Varuṇa

<sup>18</sup> On the Indo-European relations of this word see WALDE-POKORNY II p. 2 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf MACDONELL, Vedic mythology (1897) p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> On the relations between these mentions of Śunaḥśepa and the story in AB VII. 13 ff, cf already ROTH, Die Sage von Čunaḥčepa, IS 2 (1853) p. 112 ff.

<sup>21</sup> ORTO, Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (1932) p. 316, interprets these bonds as the three most important points of direction.

<sup>22</sup> This stanza returns frequently in various Vedic scriptures. See BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 260: *ud uttamam varuṇa ...* — RV I. 25. 21 is very similar.

<sup>23</sup> In Varuṇa und Mitra (1877) p. 5, 52 ff HILLEBRANDT believes the snare of Varuṇa originally to have been night and darkness, but he abandons this view in Vedische Mythologie III (1902) p. 27 (2. Aufl. II, 1929, p. 23). For JOHANSSON, Über die altindische Göttin Dhiśānā (1917) p. 161 f, the snare of Varuṇa is the winter cold, in accordance with his identification of Varuṇa and Vṛtra. Cf below p. 56, 59.

seizes especially with dropsy. In the story of Śunaḥśepa we hear how Varuṇa sends dropsy so that the belly swells (AB VII. 15). But also sin is regarded as a physical evil, not strictly distinguished from the disease it is believed to be the cause of, and so deliverance from *pāśa* may mean deliverance from sin, too. Another example where *pāśa* and words for sin appear close to one another is RV VII. 88. 6—7: "Varuṇa, if he who is thy true and dear companion, if thy friend commits sins (*āgas*) against thee, may we not atone (*bhujema*) as sinners (*enasvat*), O Mighty One. Give shelter, as a Sage, to thy singer. While we abide in thy fixed habitations, may Varuṇa loosen (*vi-mumocat*) from us the fetter (*pāśa*)."

Sometimes Varuṇa himself, sometimes other gods have the power of delivering from the fetter of Varuṇa. In RV VI. 74. 3—4 Soma-Rudra are asked to deliver (*ava-syatam*, *muñcatam*) from sin (*enas*) and likewise to deliver (*pra-muñcatam*) from Varuṇa's fetter (*pāśa*). Other words may sometimes be substituted for *pāśa*. Thus we find *dāman* in this sense in RV VII. 86. 5. The ṛṣi prays to Varuṇa: "O King, deliver (*ava-sṛja*) Vasiṣṭha like a thief of cattle, like the calf from the fetter (*dāman*)."  
Especially connected with Yama is another word for fetter, *padbīśa*.<sup>24</sup> We find it in a stanza which practically unaltered appears in different Saṃhitās, RV X. 97. 16 (AV VI. 96. 2 and VII. 112. 2, VS XII. 90): "May they (the plants) deliver (*muñcantu*) me from that which comes from a curse (*śapathya*), from that which comes from Varuṇa (*varuṇya*), from the fetter (*padbīśa*) of Yama, from every sin against the gods (*devakīl-bīśa*)". Yama is the king of the dead, and consequently his fetter means death.

As RV so AV speaks frequently of deliverance from the fetter as well of Varuṇa as of other divinities. The word *pāśa* is less restricted to Varuṇa in AV than in RV. Thus we hear in AV VI. 112. 1 of the *pāśas* of Grāhī, a demon of disease, in

<sup>24</sup> PW IV col. 387: »Der erste Theil des Wortes ist *pad* = *pad*, "Fuss", der zweite könnte viell. mit *vincire* verwandt sein.»

AV I. 31. 2 and XIX. 44. 4 of those of Nirṛti, the goddess of destruction and death.<sup>25</sup> AV XVI. 8 is a long charm containing the wish that the enemy shall not be delivered (*mā moci*) from various kinds of *pāśa*. Twenty-seven kinds are mentioned, the first one being that of Grāhī, the two last ones being that of Varuṇa and that of death (*mṛtyu*). The snare of death is called both *pāśa* and *padbīśa*. The best known AV-hymn, dealing with deliverance from the fetter of Varuṇa, is AV IV. 16. There st. 7 speaks of the hundred *pāśas* of Varuṇa, and the hope is expressed that the enemy shall not be delivered (*mā moci*) from the god: "With a hundred fetters, O Varuṇa, do thou bridle him. Let not the speaker of evil (*anṛtavāc*) be delivered from thee, O Men-watcher." Another hymn speaking of deliverance from the fetters of Varuṇa is AV VII. 83.<sup>26</sup> For "fetter" *dāman* is used in st. 1—2, *pāśa* in st. 3 (= RV I. 24. 15). St. 4, using *pāśa*, speaks concretely of evil dreams (*duṣvapnya*) and disaster (*durita*). Through the whole hymn forms of *muñcati* are used for "deliver", with the exception of the stanza taken from RV I. 24.

In the Brāhmaṇas mention of the fetter of Varuṇa is frequent. "Prajāpati healed them by means of that oblation, both the creatures that were born and those that were unborn he delivered (*pra-amuñcat*) from Varuṇa's fetter (*varuṇa-pāśa*). And his creatures were born without disease (*an-amīva*) and blemish (*a-kūlbiṣa*)" (ŚB II. 5. 2. 3). "He who is in another's mouth is in Varuṇa's fetter (*varuṇapāśa*). He is delivered (*nis-mucyate*) from Varuṇa's fetter, when he says 'Svāhā. I am delivered (*nis-mucye*) from Varuṇa's fetter'" (ŚB III. 6. 3. 20, cf VS V. 39). In ŚB XII. 7. 2. 17 *pāpman* and *pāśa* are used in the same passage: "Varuṇa seizes him who is seized by evil (*pāpmanā grhīta*). Through Varuṇa he (the priest) thus delivers (*muñcati*)

<sup>25</sup> On Nirṛti see further below p. 68 ff.

<sup>26</sup> According to Kauśika Sūtra 32.14 (CALAND, Altindisches Zauberritual, 1900, p. 105) this hymn is used in a remedial rite for dropsy. Cf WHITNEY AV p. 449.

him (the sacrificer) from Varuṇa's power (*varuṇya*). It is the final (cake). He thus delivers (*pra-muñcati*) him finally from Varuṇa's fetter (*varuṇapāśa*)". A similar passage appears in TS II. 3. 13, where the mantra that is commented upon, speaks of distress (*aṁhas*) in the form of disease (*srāma*). One may mention further that in MS IV. 8. 5 Varuṇa's fetter is praised (*namo varuṇasya pāsāya*) when it is loosened (*vi-cṛta, prati-asta*).

In the Agnicayana-ritual there is a building of an altar to Nirṛti, who is here called *pāpman*, and in this connection we also hear of deliverance from Nirṛti's *pāśa* (VS XII. 62 ff, ŚB VII. 2. 1. 1 ff). In ŚB VII. 2. 1. 15 the *pāśa* is said to be *nairṛta*, to belong to Nirṛti, and the sacrificer is said to be delivered (*pra-mucyate*) from Nirṛti's fetter.

In the Upaniṣads *pāśa* is seldom used.<sup>27</sup> In Kāṭha IV. 2 we hear of walking into the *pāśa* of death (*mṛtyu*). Several times in Śvet. we meet the phrase "after having got knowledge of God he is delivered from all fetters" (*jñātvā devam mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ* Śvet. I. 8, II. 15, IV. 16, V. 13, VI. 13). In Śvet. I. 11 we get an idea of what is indicated by *pāśa*. The text speaks of destruction of all fetters (*sarvapāśa-apahāni*), and, immediately after, birth and death are mentioned. While in the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas, belonging to the social life of the village, the evil indicated by *pāśa* consists of disease, sin, death, etc., it consists in this meditative text of the whole cycle of births and deaths.

Of special interest for the present study is the fact that the deliverance from *pāśa* is so often expressed with forms of *muñcati*. This verb has been especially knit to the metaphor of the fetter. Even if it is an exaggeration to say with GÜNTERT<sup>28</sup> that the sources of the *mokṣa*-conception are to be found wholly in the fetters of Varuṇa — we hear of fetters

<sup>27</sup> JACOB, A concordance p. 546 (*pāśa*) and 1005 (*sarvapāśa*).

<sup>28</sup> Der arische Weltkönig (1923) p. 242. Cf OTTO, Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen p. 149.

of other gods, too, and *muñcati* is used also in other constructions — the metaphor of the fetter has been and is still of great importance to this conception. Nowadays we find this terminology in the centre of the system of Śaiva Siddhānta. In this religious system *pati*, the shepherd, i. e. Śiva, delivers *paśu*, the cattle, i. e. the human soul, from *pāśa*, the bonds of material existence, and this is salvation, *mukti*.<sup>29</sup>

*Pāpman* (to a less extent *pāpa*) and *pāśa* are used in the Veda as general expressions for the evil from which the ṛṣis want to be delivered. By themselves they have nothing to say of the evil indicated by them and may be filled with varying contents. A third expression of the same general type is *aṃhas*. We have the same word in Lat. *angustus*, Germ. *eng*.<sup>30</sup> The English words "anxious, anxiety", related with *angustus*, must not tempt us, however, to believe that *aṃhas* in the Veda means a purely psychical thing as these words do.<sup>31</sup> The translations "distress, trouble" seem more adequate.<sup>32</sup> The position held by *pāpa* in classical Sanskrit as the essential word for evil is held by *aṃhas* in the Sāṃhitās.<sup>33</sup> In these parts of the Veda it is much more frequent than *pāpa* and *pāpman*, but it does not seem to appear elsewhere, except in quotations.<sup>34</sup> It is mostly used without specifications. So in RV IV.12.6 (= RV X.126.8): "Deliver (*vi-muñcatā*) us from *aṃhas*, as ye, O Vasus, delivered

<sup>29</sup> See e. g. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Brāhmanism and Hindūism* (1887) p. 89; SCHOMERUS, *Der Śaiva-Siddhānta* (1912) p. 42 f, 73, etc. — The metaphor of the snares of a god is frequent also in other religions than the Indian ones. See SCHEFFTELOWITZ, *Das Schlingen- und Netzmotiv* (1912) p. 3 ff.

<sup>30</sup> WALDE-POKORNY I p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Sanskrit-English dictionary*, New ed. (1899) p. 1, gives »anxiety» as the first translation, »trouble» as the second one, »sin» as the third one.

<sup>32</sup> »Distress» is used e. g. in WHITNEY AV p. 190 ff to AV IV.23—29.

<sup>33</sup> ŚĀYANA glosses *aṃhas* with *pāpa* e. g. RV IV.12.6 and X.68.9, likewise MAHĪDHARA to VS IV.13.

<sup>34</sup> Anyway PW I col. 6 ff gives no such references.

(*amuñcatā*) that Gauri-cow, fettered at her foot, ye Holy ones." In RV II. 28 the ṛṣi prays for deliverance from sin, *āgas*, in st. 5: "Deliver (*vi-śrathāya*) me from sin (*āgas*) as from a girdle (*raśanū*)", and in st. 6 the prayer for deliverance from *amhas* is expressed in a similar way: "Deliver (*vi-mumugdhi*) me from distress (*amhas*) as the calf from his fetter (*dāman*)".

In AV we have a whole series of hymns, IV. 23—29,<sup>35</sup> where various gods in the refrains are called upon to deliver (*muñcati*) from *amhas*. Various divinities are sometimes called "deliverer from distress", *amhomuc*. So Indra in RV X. 63. 9 and TS II. 4. 2. 2, the waters in VS IV. 13. In TS VII. 5. 22 Agni, Indra, and Heaven and Earth are *amhomuc*, while Mitra-Varuṇa, Vāyu-Savitṛ, and the Aśvins are *āgomuc*, and the Maruts and the Viśvedevāḥ *enomuc*, an example of how as a general word for trouble *amhas* is paralleled with typical words for sin. In TS II. 3. 13 we find *amhas* specified as disease (*srāma*).<sup>36</sup> RV I. 115 is a morning-prayer, where st. 6 runs: "O Gods, to-day while the sun is ascending, deliver (*nis-pipṛtā*) us from trouble (*amhas*) and calumny (*avadya*)". In this passage we have a synonym of *muñcati*, *nis-piparti*, while in all the quotations given above *muñcati* is used. It would be an easy matter to give examples showing *amhas* constructed in other ways, as the word is of frequent occurrence. Such examples speaking of protection against *amhas*, of driving *amhas* away etc., would not give us any new aspect of this word, however. I have preferred to quote passages with *muñcati*, but it should be stressed that there is no special terminological connection between *amhas* and this verb, as is the case with *pāśa*.

*Amhas* means evil in a general sense, and may be paralleled with words for disease, calumny, sin etc. When we speak of sin, we mean a committed evil, a wrong-doing. As I have already said and shall further dwell on in chapter VI, there is

<sup>35</sup> *Mṛgārasūktāni*. Cf BLOOMFIELD, The Atharvaveda (1899) p. 82.

<sup>36</sup> MONIER-WILLIAMS op. cit. p. 1274: "lameness". — Cf above p. 40.

in the Veda no clear distinction between committed evil and evil coming from outside. As a rule, *am̐has* means evil coming from outside. There does not seem to be more than one single passage in the Veda, where decisively committed evil is indicated by this word. In AV XIX. 44. 8 we read: "Much evil (*an̐ṛta*), O King Varuṇa, doth man speak here. From that *am̐has* do thou deliver (*pari-muñca*) us, O thou of thousand-fold heroism." Here *am̐has* indicates improper speech, thus showing that it may comprise as well physical as moral evils.<sup>37</sup> Some scholars attempt to find an evolution from the former to the latter sense. So HOPKINS (*Ethics of India*, 1924, p. 31) writes that *am̐has* "is physical distress, but later becomes 'sin' rather than distress and in some early texts interchanges with *enas*, sin (cf AV 4. 27. 1 and 7, with the varied readings)." That in the early texts *am̐has* may be paralleled with words for sin is demonstrated above, but that there is an evolution to the ethical sense in later texts does not seem to be correct. Neither HOPKINS, nor Mrs RHYS-DAVIDS, who in *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1936 p. 136 expresses similar ideas, gives any references to such later texts, nor do the dictionaries. PW gives the translation "Sünde" only from lexicographers, without any text references.<sup>38</sup> The opinion of the two mentioned scholars seems to be founded more in a dogmatical evolutionism than in the texts.

A fourth general expression of evil is *agha*, by GRASSMANN but not by WALDE-POKORNY etymologically connected with *am̐has*.<sup>39</sup> We have the same word in Avesta as *aya-*, also there meaning evil in a general sense.<sup>40</sup> As *am̐has*, so *agha* should not generally be translated with "sin", as is sometimes done.<sup>41</sup> But also

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<sup>37</sup> Cf WINTERNITZ, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur* I (1908) p. 120.

<sup>38</sup> PW I col. 7.

<sup>39</sup> GRASSMANN WB col. 12; WALDE-POKORNY I p. 41. Also HOPKINS op. cit. p. 31 declares the two words to be "cognate".

<sup>40</sup> BARTHOLOMAE col. 47 f.

<sup>41</sup> See above p. 32.



as regards this word, we find that in the Veda there are no strict divisions between physical and moral evils. In AV XIV. 2. 59 ff *agha* is constructed with *karoti*, "do", meaning committed evil. Here also the fundamental word for sin, *enas*, appears as its parallel. With this construction may be compared the word *aghakṛt*, evil-doer, in AV X. 1. 5. But as a rule *agha* is not constructed with words for do, commit, and then it has the sense of evil coming from the outside, not least in the shape of human or superhuman enemies. Often it is not possible to decide, whether a person is meant or not, e. g. in RV VII. 19. 7, a prayer to Indra: "O Strong One, in this thy assembly, may we not be given up to evil (*agha*), thou of bay horses." In most cases the impersonal sense is the most natural one. When distinctly a person is meant, *aghaśaṁsa*, evil-speaker, or other similar compounds are used.

There does not seem to be one single case where *agha* is used with *muñcati* in the sense of deliver. With a form of *muñcati* it appears only in AV VIII. 6. 26, but then with *prati-muñcati*, attach, the contrast of deliver. The hope of deliverance from *agha* is expressed with other words, e. g. *rakṣati*, protect, in RV I. 166. 8. In RV I. 97 (= AV IV. 33), a hymn to Agni, each stanza ends with the words: "May he shine away (*apaśośucat*) evil (*agha*) from us." Finally, it may be of interest to note that in RV II. 29. 5 we meet *pāśa* and *agha* as parallels: "far away (*āre*) the bonds (*pāśa*), far away the evils (*agha*)."

*Agha* is seldom used in the Veda outside the Samhitās. In contrast to *aṁhas*, however, it remains a living word in classical Sanskrit.

In this chapter I have reviewed the general Vedic words for evil as something to be delivered or protected from. These words have no specified, concrete senses. From the contexts we have seen that they may indicate the most varying kinds of evil. Personal enemies, disease, calumny, death are the dominating evils in the ritual texts. They will be discussed in the two

following chapters. In the meditative texts death is feared as a great evil, but also birth, i. e. the whole cycle of existence. With this evil chapter V will deal. In the sixth chapter the conception of sin will be discussed. As we have already seen, the general words for evil may indicate also that which we call sin, wrong-doing, not clearly distinguishing it from other evils. In the ritual texts it is intimately connected with physical evils as disease. In the meditative texts questionings on the conception of sin bring us to that which has also appeared above as an evil, the works fettering man in the cycle of existence.

### III.

## HUMAN AND SUPERHUMAN ENEMIES, DISEASES, CURSES

In a prayer to Sūrya, the sun, we find these words (RV X. 37. 6—7): “May we not suffer want (*sūna*) in the presence of Sūrya. May we live happily and reach old age. Every day, with fine spirits and clear eyes, rich in offspring, free from sickness (*anamīva*), free from sin (*anāgas*), may we living long, day by day behold thee, Sūrya, rich in friends, when thou risest.” These lines express fairly typically the main contents of the Vedic hymns, which, with the words of BLOOMFIELD,<sup>1</sup> may be said to be “a long-drawn cry for prosperity.” This prosperity means worldly wealth in every respect: much cattle, many sons, good health, long life. And evil is everything that threatens a life full of such things. Asking from what evil the Vedic ṛṣis wanted to be delivered, we must first direct our attention to these threats.

An ordinary name for a human enemy as well in the Veda as later is *śatru*.<sup>2</sup> To Indra the prayer is directed: “Through these thy friendships, O God invoked by many, may we be victors over every foeman” (*śatru*, RV VI. 19. 13). *Ari*, appearing in RV VII. 48. 3 together with *śatru*, has a less clear sense. It has been the object of many speculations as to its original

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<sup>1</sup> The Atharvaveda p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> SĀXYA frequently glosses various words for “enemy” with *śatru*, see e. g. RV VI. 6. 6.

meaning,<sup>3</sup> the last treatise being written by THIEME.<sup>4</sup> On somewhat uncertain grounds, preferably due to the later use of the word, THIEME explains *ari* as "foreigner", and this neutral sense has developed as well in a friendly as in a hostile direction. Of the natural conception of the foreigner as an enemy<sup>5</sup> *ari* would thus be an example. Anyway in RV *ari* often occurs in the sense of enemy (not so often in the other parts of the Veda). Beside the hymn already mentioned, I may quote from RV VIII. 48. 8 a prayer to Soma: "Give us not up to the pleasure of our foe (*ari*)."

Rather unusual words for human enemies are *mṛdh*, *sprdh*, *sridh*, *vanus*, *riṣ*. Two of them are met with in RV VI. 6. 6, a prayer to Agni: "With might drive away the perils (*bhaya*), fighting (*vanuṣyat*) our foemen (*sprdh*) consume those who fight against us (*vanus*)."

In VS VIII. 44 Indra is called *vimṛdh*, "averted of enemies", and he is asked to beat (*vi-jahi*) the enemies (*mṛdh*). In TS II. 4. 2. 1 the same epithet is used of Indra together with the name *amhomuc*, dealt with above p. 42.

Of the same short type is *dviṣ*, which is frequently used as well for enemies as for enmity in a more abstract sense. The verb *dveṣti*, to hate, is much used, and an enemy is often a hater, *dviṣat*. The same root appears as *ṭbaēš*-<sup>6</sup> in Avesta. In RV IV. 1. 4 we find the neutral *dveṣas*<sup>7</sup> with a form of *muñcati*:

<sup>3</sup> PW I col. 411; GRASSMANN WB col. 105; BERGAIGNE, *La religion védique* II (1878) p. 218 f, and *Études sur le lexique du Rig-veda*, JA 8. 4 (1884) p. 169 ff; OLDENBERG, *Vedische Untersuchungen* 10, ZDMG 54 (1900) p. 167 ff; GELDNER in FISCHER-GELDNER, *Vedische Studien* III (1901) p. 72 ff; NEISSER, *Zum Wörterbuch des Rgveda* I (1924) p. 98 ff, II (1930) p. 19 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Fremdling im Rigveda* (1938).

<sup>5</sup> Cf GRÖNBECH, *Primitiv religion* (1915) p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> BARTHOLOMAE col. 814 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Words of this type are common among Vedic words for evil. We have *rapas*, *enas*, *āgas*, etc. They are neutral, but *rakṣas* of the same type appears as well masc. *rakṣās* as neutr. *rākṣas*. The regular plurals: *dveṣāmsi*, *rakṣāmsi*, etc., have a collective sense, in which personal and

"Deliver (*pra-mumugdhī*) us from all enmities (*dveṣas*)."  
Prayers like "drive away (*yuyodhī*) enmities (*dveṣas*)" are frequent (e. g. RV II. 6. 4). In AV, YV and the Brāhmaṇas very often in imprecations we meet the formula: he who hates us and whom we hate (*yo 'smān dveṣṭi yaṁ ca vayaṁ dviṣ-maḥ*)".<sup>8</sup> A very important object of the sacrifice is to conquer such enemies.

Sometimes the activities of the foes are more clearly indicated than is the case in the words mentioned above. He may be a thief (*stena*), a robber (*taskara*), a waylayer (*paripanthin*),<sup>9</sup> a betrayer (*ripu*).<sup>10</sup> We read in RV V. 3. 11: "Thieves (*stena*), betrayful (*ripu*) men have been seen. Unknown have been the plottings of the wicked (*vṛjina*)."<sup>11</sup> The enemy may further be godless: *adevayat*, *adeva*, *adevatra*, *adevayu*, *ayajyu*, *anyavrata*, *apavrata*, *avrata* etc.<sup>12</sup> He may speak with a double tongue: *dvayāvin* (e. g. RV II. 23. 5).<sup>13</sup> The danger of evil speech will be observed below. The evil-speaking enemy may also be called *aghaśamsa* or *duḥśamsa* (e. g. RV VIII. 18. 14).

Especially in AV the human foe is very often called *sapatna*, rival, a word which in RV does not occur outside the tenth

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impersonal senses are not distinguished. DELBRÜCK, Altindische Syntax (1888) p. 101; SCHMIDT, Die Pluralbildungen der indogermanischen Neutra (1889) p. 1 ff and 225; WACKERNAGEL, Vorlesungen über Syntax I, 2. Aufl. (1926) p. 101 f.

<sup>8</sup> BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 814. It is often stated in the Brāhmaṇas that such imprecations may be used or not used, according to the desire of the sacrificer. The name of the enemy may be mentioned, the ritual showing in what way. See e. g. SB I. 2. 4. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Cf WIKANDER, Vayu I (1941) p. 137 ff.

<sup>10</sup> On the etymology of *ripu* see proposals in WALDE-POKORNY II p. 403. Like many other Vedic words *ripu* may be used adjectively as well as substantively.

<sup>11</sup> Cf *vṛakṭi*, to bend, turn. WALDE-POKORNY I p. 271 f. English *wrong* is a related word. Cf HOPKINS, Ethics of India (1924) p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Cf LUDWIG, Der Rigveda III (1878) p. 278.

<sup>13</sup> RV II. 23 gives a most ample collection of words for foes and evil things.

maṇḍala. An example among many is AV IV. 35. 7: "I beat down the hater (*dviṣat*), the god-insulter (*devapīṇu*). What rivals (*sapatna*) are mine, let them be driven away (*apabhavantu*)." More frequent in AV than in RV is also *amitra*, the opposite to *mitra*, friend. "Whether one of our own or whether a stranger, fellow or outsider, who assails (*abhidāsati*) us, let Rudra with a volley pierce (*vi-vidhyatu*) those my enemies (*amitra*)" the words run in AV I. 19. 3.

In ŚB the enemies are frequently called *sapatna* as in AV (e. g. ŚB VIII. 5. 1. 6 f). Another word for enemy which occurs very often in the stereotypic formulas of ŚB is *bhrātrvya*, originally meaning cousin or brother's son (from *bhrātr*, brother). That this word has come to mean enemy and is so very frequently used in this sense gives a sad impression of social conditions in Vedic times, just as in the stanza from AV, quoted above, relatives and fellows appeared as enemies. From ŚB I may quote an example among many: "He raises that thunderbolt against the wicked, spiteful enemy (*pāpman dviṣat bhrātrvya*), even as Indra at that time raised the thunderbolt against Vṛtra" (ŚB I. 2. 4. 3).

In the Upaniṣads, concentrated as they are on the inner life, we hear very seldom of such enemies as mentioned above. The line between ŚB and Bṛh. is hard to draw, and the beginnings of this Upaniṣad may as well be regarded as a part of the Brāhmaṇa.<sup>14</sup> In Bṛh. I. 3. 7 we read that for him who has the right knowledge (*ya evam veda*) the hateful enemy (*dviṣat bhrātrvya*) perishes. Taitt. moves also very close to the sacrifice. In Taitt. III. 10. 4 we hear that all hateful rivals (*dviṣat sapatna*) and unfriendly enemies (*apriya bhrātrvya*) die around him who worships Brahman in the right way. But otherwise the Upaniṣads have nothing to say of human enemies, and it is typical that once we find *dviṣat bhrātrvya* used for parts of one's own body (Bṛh. II. 2. 1).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Not regarding the fact that formally the whole Bṛh. is a part of ŚB.

<sup>15</sup> At least according to Śaṅkara's interpretation, which DEUSSEN,

It might be interesting to see, whether it can be decided who the enemies, mentioned in the Veda, are: rival priests, hostile kings, etc. In the oldest time we have to do with Indian natives fighting against the invading Aryans,<sup>16</sup> but the same expressions have later been used for other political or religious enemies. Wars and hostilities have prevailed. Only in the meditative forest life have they ceased. The words for enemies are partly different in RV and ŚB, AV standing in the middle perhaps a little nearer to ŚB. This may be due to chronological reasons, the words of RV dying out and new ones taking their place. It may also depend on literary reasons, the words of RV being more poetical. We may also think of different dialects in different priest-schools, etc.

For the present study a more detailed investigation of these things does not seem necessary. It has been sufficient to prove the fact that in the social stage of his life the Vedic ṛṣi fears human enemies, praying to the gods for protection against them, whereas this attitude is not actual in the forest stage. For the study of the ideas of deliverance from evil it is of less interest whether the enemies are priests or kings, Aryans or aborigines. A formal reason for not going into details on this point is the fact that the texts do not speak of "deliverance" from this kind of evil. The word *muñcati* and its synonyms are never used in these connections. Above we have met it only once, with *dveṣas*, and *dveṣas* has mostly an impersonal sense. But if the gods are not called upon to deliver from human enemies, they are anyway called upon to conquer them. And this difference seems to be a difference more of words than of sense.

What has now been said is partly valid also for the question however, doubts. (DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upanishad's* p. 412). SENART, *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad* (1964) p. 28, accepts it. Even if concrete personal enemies are meant, the passage does not invalidate what is said above of the general character of the Upaniṣads in this respect.

<sup>16</sup> Perhaps also with enemies of the Aryans before their invasion of India. Cf. above p. 6.

of superhuman enemies, i. e. demons and gods. Also here *muñcati* with synonyms is no common expression. But there is no sharp line between demons and such evils as diseases, combined with which *muñcati* is very frequently used. In the same way as I have said something of human enemies even when they appear in other combinations than with *muñcati*, I must do so of superhuman enemies.

Every student of the Veda easily discovers that the texts do not always distinguish between human and superhuman enemies.<sup>17</sup> Already in some of the quotations given above it has not been possible to state whether human or demonical enemies are meant.

After death friends as well as enemies may be feared as a kind of dangerous demons. In the Veda we do not hear so much of the dangerous spirits of the deceased as in later Hinduism, however.<sup>18</sup> We find in the Veda no fixed conception of the fate of the dead, and we often meet contradictory statements. In some texts, however, the fathers are at least in some respect regarded as evil beings. In ŚB II. 1.3.1 ff the gods and the fathers are contrasted in every way, and it is said that the fathers, living in the south, do not have evil dispelled from them (*anapahata-pāpman*). To them belongs the night, while the day belongs to the gods. And in the ritual everything is different when the fathers and when the gods are objects of the sacrifice.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> BERGAIGNE, La religion védique III p. 183; BLOOMFIELD, The Atharvaveda p. 65; BUSCHARDT, Vṛtra (1945) p. 22. Cf also CHAṬṬOPĀDHYĀYA, *Dāsa* and *dasyu* in the Rgveda-Samhitā, Atti del XIX Congr. Intern. d. Orientalisti 1935, p. 305 ff. C. means that *dāsa* and other words which as a rule are believed to indicate human enemies among the aborigines of India, signify demons. On the question of *dāsa* and *dasyu*, see further e. g. KONOW, The Aryan gods (1921) p. 16 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Cf ARMBAN, Rudra (1922) p. 167 ff, with further references (on the sense of *bhūta*).

<sup>19</sup> HILLEBRANDT, Ritual-litteratur (1897) p. 114 f, Vedische Mythologie 2. Aufl. II (1929) p. 402 ff.



In the life of the living, in the first place sorcery makes the distinctions between human and demonical enemies vague. Just as an example of how they are involved in one another, I shall quote some stanzas from a well-known hymn, appearing as well in RV as in AV (RV VII. 104, AV VIII. 4). I give them from a recent translation by W. N. BROWN.<sup>20</sup>

1. O Indra-Soma, burn the demon (*rakṣas*); bear down on him; ye two bulls, thrust down those who prosper in darkness. Crush away the impious, scorch them, slay, push, become sharp (so as to put) down the devourers (*atrin*).
2. O Indra-Soma, let painful heat boil up, like a pot in a fire, against him who plots evil (*aghaśamsa*) against (us). Set inescapable hate (*dveṣas*) against the Brahman-hating (*brahmadviṣ*), flesh-devouring, evil-looking Kimīdin.
3. O Indra-Soma, pierce the evil-doers (*duṣkṛt*) that they may fall into the chasm, the bottomless darkness, so that not a single one of them shall come up here again. Let this be your furious rage to overcome (them).

In twentyfive stanzas the hymn goes on in the same way, using various names for the evil enemies and their vileness. In stanza 7 the Rakṣasas are also called *druh*. Stanza 8 speaks of their improper words (*anṛta vacas*). Stanza 9 mentions the goddess of destruction, Nirṛti, and the hope is expressed that the enemy shall go to her lap. The adversary is called *ripu* and *stena* (cf above p. 48) in stanza 10. Stanza 13 mentions him as *vṛjina*, and says: "He (Soma) slays the Rakṣas; he slays him who works false charms (*asad vadat*). Both of these fall in Indra's snare (*prasiti*)."<sup>21</sup> Stanza 14 repudiates the accusation that the poet is godless (*anṛtadeva*).<sup>21</sup> Stanza 15 runs: "May

<sup>20</sup> The Rigvedic equivalent for hell, JAOS 61 (1941) p. 76 ff.

<sup>21</sup> GRASSMANN's interpretation of *anṛtadeva* as "false player", referring it to the root *div*, "play", WB col. 62, is generally rejected. BERGAIGNE, Études sur le lexique du Rig-veda, JA 8.3 (1884) p. 209; NEISSER, Zum Wörterbuch des Rgveda I (1924) p. 41.

I die right now, if I am a sorcerer (*yātudhāna*),<sup>22</sup> or if I have burnt up a man's span of life. May he be separated from ten heroes who lyingly calls me a sorcerer." In the following stanzas we hear how the Rakṣasas fly as night-birds or appear as flying dogs, disturbing the sacrifice. Stanza 24 mentions the witchcraft (*māyā*) of the enemy: "O Indra, slay the male sorcerer (*yātudhāna*) and the female who triumphs by her magic (*māyā*)."

Hardly any other Vedic hymn is so expressive and dark as this one. The ṛṣi sees himself threatened by powerful enemies. There is for him no distinction between demons, flying in the air, and human adversaries, skilful in witchcraft. We get a good review of different names for demons. As in the whole Veda, so here, too, the most frequent name is *rakṣas*.<sup>23</sup> *Yātudhāna*, too, is frequent also in other hymns, especially in AV. *Atrīn*, rendered with "devourer" above, is generally combined with *atti*, eat.<sup>24</sup> Further the demon foe is called *druh*. BERGAIGNE calls *druh* "la tromperie personnifiée".<sup>25</sup> The word is more frequent in Iran than in India, and Avesta has much to

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<sup>22</sup> DESHMUKH, The origin and development of religion in Vedic literature p. 279, asserts that *yātudhāna* never means a human enemy and should not be translated with "sorcerer", but as stated above, human and demonical enemies are not distinguished in the Veda.

<sup>23</sup> The etymology of *rakṣas* is doubtful. The ordinary verb *rakṣati* means "protect". PW VI col. 218 and GRASSMANN WB col. 1181 derive the word from another *rakṣati* with the sense "hurt", but the evidence of this verb is not strong. Sometimes *rakṣas* is connected with Greek ἐρέχθω, "break": WALDE-POKORNY II p. 362. The Vedic Brahmins themselves try to connect *rakṣas* with the ordinary *rakṣati*: "Whilst the gods were engaged in performing sacrifice, the Asuras and Rakṣasas forbade (*rarakṣuḥ*) them saying: 'Ye shall not sacrifice', and because they forbade (*arākṣan*), they are called Rakṣas" (SB I.1.1.16). PRZYLUŚKI, Deva et asura, Rocznik Orjentalistyczny 8 (1932) p. 25, combines the two aspects: "Protéger et faire du mal sont deux aspects, nécessairement connexes, d'une même activité."

<sup>24</sup> GRASSMANN WB col. 81.

<sup>25</sup> La religion védique II p. 359.

say of the *drug*-, falsehood, the enemy of truth.<sup>26</sup> In the Veda it has not such a dominating position. An example from RV, VII. 59. 8, has been quoted above, p. 27.

It seems to be an exaggeration when LUDWIG<sup>27</sup> says that the worship of demons, characteristic for AV, is essentially foreign to RV, "vilmer demselben aufgedrängt". In the existent RV we cannot exclude all hymns that deal with demons, regarding them as "aufgedrängt". But on the other hand it is of course undeniable that AV is much richer in this field than RV. In the official hymn-book that RV is, the demons have not their proper place.

It does not belong to my subject, however, to go into the details of Vedic demonology. In order to give a somewhat fuller idea of the richness of the demonology, I shall only briefly mention the great class of demons centered around *arāti*. In RV I. 29. 4 *rātayas* as good spirits are contrasted to the evil *arātayas*. In AV a great number of hymns deal with *arāti*.<sup>28</sup> I give an example among many: "Both the curse (*śapatha*) that is a rival's (*sāpatna*), and the curse that is a sister's (*jāmi*),<sup>29</sup> what a priest from fury may curse, all that be underneath our feet. Protect (*pari-pāhi*) me about, my progeny, and what riches are ours. Let not *arāti* get the better of us (*tārīt*, note the play of words: *arāti* — *mā tārīt*), let not the hostile plotters (*abhimāti*) get the better of us" (AV II. 7. 2 and 4). That *arāti* is a hostile demon or class of demons is clear.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the

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<sup>26</sup> BARTHOLOMAE col. 778 ff; SPIEGEL, Die arische Periode (1887) p. 215 f; NYBERG, Irans forntida religioner (1937) p. 148, Germ. transl., Die Religionen des alten Iran (1938) p. 133.

<sup>27</sup> Der Rigveda III p. 350.

<sup>28</sup> Cf HARDY, Die vedisch-brahmanische Periode (1893) p. 203 f.

<sup>29</sup> Perhaps not a relative (so WHITNEY AV p. 47) but a female demon. OTTO, Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (1932) p. 152 ff, observes the great rôle played by "sisters" and "mothers" as evil-minded demons in India to-day as in ancient India. Female demons are of course not distinguished from female sorcerers, cf RV VII. 104. 24, quoted above p. 53.

<sup>30</sup> There are also passages where the word seems to have an im-

word is connected with *rāti*, "gift", signifying one who does not give, but this etymology has no great importance.<sup>31</sup> *Arāti* has a generally hostile character. A related word is *arāya* which we have met above p. 31, frequent in AV not least in female form *arāyī*. Also in later forms of Indian religions the dreaded demons have preferably been female.<sup>32</sup> In RV, but not in AV, we have further the similar *arāvan*. Whether also *ari* etymologically belongs to this class of words is most uncertain, hardly believable, but anyway the ṛṣis certainly associated the words.<sup>33</sup> Finally, one may also mention *ararivas*<sup>33a</sup> and *araru*.

In the formulas of ŚB the demons are rather monotonously called *nāṣṭrā rakṣāmsi* or *rakṣāmsi nāṣṭrā*.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, we often hear of Vṛtra, whom I have not yet discussed but who appears also in the other ritual parts of the Veda, as is well known. As to the original character of Vṛtra the opinions differ. According to OLDENBERG<sup>35</sup> the story of Indra's victory over Vṛtra is originally a thunder-myth. Later the same myth

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personal sense. Cf BERGAIGNE, Études sur le lexique du R̥ig-veda JA 8.3 (1884) p. 552.

<sup>31</sup> PW I col. 409; GRASSMANN WB col. 104. THIEME, Der Fremdling im R̥igveda p. 43 f, calls this etymology a supposition without any authority. Cf also LUDWIG, Der R̥igveda III p. 278.

<sup>32</sup> CHARPENTIER, Indien (1925) p. 574, believes that the female demons of Hinduism are of Dravidian, not Aryan origin, but his opinions as to what has Dravidian origins and what Aryan origins, are founded on modern Hinduism, and lack convincing proofs.

<sup>33</sup> GRASSMANN WB col. 105.

<sup>33a</sup> Cf HAUER, Der Vṛātya (1927) p. 151 ff.

<sup>34</sup> It is characteristic for the Brāhmaṇas that the neutr.plur., not the masc.plur. of *rakṣas* is used. — WEBER, Zur Kenntniss des vedischen Opferrituals, IS 13 (1873) p. 266 f, takes the different use of these two expressions in ŚB as an evidence of the different origins of the respective parts of ŚB, indicated also by other facts. The expression *nāṣṭrā rakṣāmsi* is used in ŚB I—V, *rakṣāmsi nāṣṭrā* in ŚB VI—X. For instances, see ŚB III.3.3.16 and IX.5.2.3.

<sup>35</sup> Die Religion des Veda, 2. Aufl. p. 138 f.

was used of the flowing of the rivers. HILLEBRANDT<sup>36</sup> means that originally Vṛtra represented the coldness of the winter which retains the rivers in the mountains. RENOU<sup>37</sup> interprets him more abstractly as the personified resistance. In a similar way he is interpreted by OTTO.<sup>38</sup> According to the most recent treatise, BUSCHARDT, Vṛtra (1945), Vṛtra is identical with the Soma in the Soma-sacrifice, but just as the juice, he comprises all sorts of evil, those of nature, those of moral life, etc. (p. 113 and passim). — Evidently, Vṛtra has been very freely treated by the mythological imagination. He is a prominent demon without any fixed connections with special kinds of evil. As a demon he is not distinctly individual. In RV Vṛtra appears frequently in neutr.plur.<sup>39</sup> *vṛtrāni*, e. g. VII. 83. 9: "One (Indra) conquers the Vṛtras (SĀYANA glosses: *śatrūn*) in the fights, the other (Varuṇa) guards the laws (*vrata*, note the play on words: *vṛtrāni*—*vratāni*)". But mostly Vṛtra is the great dragon (masc.sing.) killed by Indra in the fight described in RV I. 32 and many other famous hymns. In ŚB we see how the individual, mythical conception of Vṛtra is interpreted in a general, collective way. At the end of Agnicayana some rites are performed in order to make good that which has been made wrongly (ŚB IX. 5. 2). Some formulas from VS are uttered: "For mighty strength that smiteth Vṛtra, and for victory in battle, we call thee hither, O Indra. O much-invoked Indra, crush thou the handleless Kuṇāru, lurking here, together with the Dānus. With might smite thou the footless Vṛtra, the ever-

<sup>36</sup> Indra und Vṛtra, ZDMG 50 (1896) p. 665 f, Aus Alt- und Neuindien (1922) p. 3 f, Vedische Mythologie 2. Aufl. II (1929) p. 154 ff.

<sup>37</sup> La poésie religieuse de l'Inde antique (1942) p. 13. Cf BENVENISTE-RENOU, Vṛtra et Vṛthragna (1934) p. 198, where it is vindicated that as a personal demon Vṛtra is secondarily formed from the name Vṛtrahan. Criticism in KERTH, Indra and Vṛtra, IC 1 (1934—35) p. 461 ff.

<sup>38</sup> OTTO op. cit. p. 160.

<sup>39</sup> On the collective sense of neutr.plur. see above p. 47 f, n. 7. The change from masc.sing. to neutr.plur. has Indo-European parallels, see SCHMIDT op. cit. p. 5.

growing mocker" (VS XVIII.68 f). This recitation ŚB comments on in the following way (ŚB IX.5.2.4): "For now the gods, having warded off Vṛtra, evil (*pāpman*), performed this rite (*karman*) delivered from evil (*apahatapāpman*). And in like manner does the sacrificer, having warded off Vṛtra, evil, now perform this rite delivered from evil".<sup>40</sup> From another part of ŚB I give a similar example: "Vṛtra is *pāpman*. With the help of Indra, the slayer of Vṛtra (*vṛtrahan*), he thus slays Pāpman Vṛtra who ever keeps him from well-being (*bhūti*), from virtue (*kalyāna*), and from the good work (*sādhu karman*). This is why he (offers) to Indra Vṛtrahan" (ŚB XI.1.5.7).

The Upaniṣads are not interested in demons. In the principal Upaniṣads we hear of *rakṣas* or *rākṣasa* only in a few enumerations in Maitri,<sup>41</sup> which in many ways is not a typically Vedic Upaniṣad.

The demons, now mentioned, are evil-minded and impersonal. Some of them, e. g. *arāti* and first of all *vṛtra*, may sometimes appear as individuals, but even then they are often collective conceptions and it is then of no significance whether they appear in plural or singular form. But which trait distinguishes them from the gods, the malignity or the impersonality? In the scholarship of comparative religion there is no unity on the distinctions between gods and demons. Writing on Demons and spirits in ERE (vol. 4 p. 565 ff) GRAY says in his introductory article that gods and demons must be well distinguished (p. 566), but he does not give any exact criteria for the distinction, and admits that the confusion of demons and spirits with gods is frequent. In the article by CROOKE on Demons and spirits, Indian (ERE 4 p. 601 ff) it is said that "no clear distinction can be drawn between god and demon" (p. 607). When a distinction is attempted the most accepted criterion seems to be that a god is benevolent, a demon malignant. When e. g. LINDBLOM,

<sup>40</sup> Similarly in ŚB VI.2.2.19.

<sup>41</sup> JACOB, A concordance p. 780, 787, 178.

Boken om Job (1940) p. 159 ff, contrasts God as god with God as demon, he thinks only of the malignity. Nevertheless the other criterion, that of individuality, seems to be more important.<sup>42</sup> At least in Indian religions it is not suitable to call a god demon as soon as he is malignant. But it is interesting to note that malignant gods are often pushed into the background so that they lose their individual traits. Then we may call them demons.

The vague distinctions between gods and demons are well illustrated by the relations between *devas* and *asuras*. In the Veda we often read of fights between these two classes of superhuman beings.<sup>43</sup> The *asuras* are defeated, they are pushed into the background, they become demons. In Iran *asura* becomes a name of the great god Ahura Mazdāh, the *devas* becoming demons.<sup>44</sup>

Sometimes in the Veda *devas* and *asuras* are feared side by side: "The amulet born from the ocean, born from Vṛtra, making day — let it protect us on all sides from the missile of gods (*deva*) and *asuras*" (AV IV. 10. 5). A proof of the complicated relations between gods and *asuras* is further shown by the fact that the gods sometimes get the epithet *asura*. This is not least the case with Varuṇa. Without dwelling any longer on the sense of the word *asura*, I now proceed to saying something of the gods in their malignant attitude, beginning with Varuṇa, who is at the same time loved and feared, benevolent and malignant.

Who is Varuṇa? No other Vedic god has aroused so great

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<sup>42</sup> ARBMAN, Rudra p. 179, uses a double criterion. Speaking of *bhūta* he says: "‘Dämon’ mit dem Doppelsinne: ‘Göttliches Wesen niederer Ordnung’ und ‘böses Wesen’, der dem Worte in der modernen Terminologie zukommt, mag der Ausdruck sein, welcher *bhūta* am nächsten entspricht."

<sup>43</sup> E. g. AV IX. 2. 17 f and SB IX. 2. 3. 8.

<sup>44</sup> On the lively discussions concerning the *asura*-conception see e. g. HILLEBRANDT, Vedische Mythologie, 2. Aufl. II p. 417 ff, with further references.

an interest among modern scholars. The majority of them believe that originally Varuṇa was a god of the encompassing sky, deriving his name from *vr̥ṇoti*, cover (KAEGI,<sup>45</sup> SCHROEDER,<sup>46</sup> BARTH,<sup>47</sup> DEUSSEN,<sup>48</sup> HOPKINS,<sup>49</sup> MACDONELL,<sup>50</sup> BLOOMFIELD,<sup>51</sup> KEITH,<sup>52</sup> PETTAZZONI,<sup>53</sup> etc.). His name is then identified with Greek Οὐρανός.<sup>54</sup> BERGAIGNE<sup>55</sup> accepts this etymology, but maintains that the sense "cover" includes the sense "shut up, imprison". He draws attention to the dark traits of Varuṇa, which make him related to Vṛtra, whose name is derived from the same verb. MEILLET<sup>56</sup> rejects the etymology, attempting to explain Varuṇa as a personification of the contract, just like Mitra. PETERSSON<sup>57</sup> vindicates that the name of Varuṇa is derived from an Indo-European root *\*uer-*, "bind, fetter", Varuṇa thus meaning "he who binds". Being less concerned with the etymology of the name, OLDENBERG<sup>58</sup> and HILLEBRANDT<sup>59</sup> mean

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<sup>45</sup> Der Rigveda 2. Aufl. (1881) p. 85, 200 f.

<sup>46</sup> Indiens Literatur und Cultur (1887) p. 49, Arische Religion I (1914) p. 321 ff.

<sup>47</sup> Oeuvres I p. 27 ff.

<sup>48</sup> AGP I.1 p. 85.

<sup>49</sup> The religions of India (1895) p. 65 ff, with many reservations.

<sup>50</sup> Vedic mythology (1897) p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> The religion of the Veda (1908) p. 136 f.

<sup>52</sup> The god Varuṇa, IHQ 9 (1933) p. 515 ff, Varuṇa and Ouranos, IC 3 (1936—37) p. 421 ff.

<sup>53</sup> La religione di Zarathustra (1920) p. 39 ff, La confessione dei peccati I (1929) p. 231.

<sup>54</sup> Cf esp. SOLMSEN, Untersuchungen zur griechischen Laut- und Verslehre (1901) p. 297 f.

<sup>55</sup> La religion védique III p. 112 ff.

<sup>56</sup> Le dieu indo-iranien Mitra, JA 10.10 (1907) p. 156 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Einige Beiträge zu den Götternamen *Mitra* und *Varuṇa*. Studier tillegnade E. Tegnér (1918) p. 223 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Die Religion des Veda, 2. Aufl. p. 178 ff, Varuṇa und die Adityas, ZDMG 50 (1896) p. 43 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Vedische Mythologie, 2. Aufl. II (1929) p. 1 ff, where H. rejects the sky-theory, earlier advanced by himself in Varuṇa und Mitra (1877) p. 4 ff.



that originally Varuṇa was a moon-god. JOHANSSON<sup>60</sup> and J. J. MEYER<sup>61</sup> see in him a god of death and vegetation. PISCHEL<sup>62</sup> and KRETSCHMER<sup>63</sup> explain him as an ancient sea-god. SÖDERBLOM<sup>64</sup> interprets him as a great magician without any special connections with nature. Still more eagerly GÜNTERT<sup>65</sup> rejects every combination with natural phenomena, explaining Varuṇa as "der arische Weltkönig", and DUMEZIL<sup>66</sup> accepts this view. OTTO,<sup>67</sup> too, rejects the view of Varuṇa as a god of nature and explains his name as meaning both "he who gives" and "he who binds". A god who binds can release, too, and this is, according to OTTO, the way by which Varuṇa has come to be especially knit to the idea of deliverance. The striking similarities between Varuṇa and Babylonian gods, especially Sin, are observed especially by B. GEIGER<sup>68</sup> and CARNOY,<sup>69</sup> who suppose a direct influence from the Babylonian religion on the Indo-Iranian one. RÖNNOW<sup>70</sup> believes that Varuṇa is the god of an Aryan tribe that invaded India earlier than the tribe worshipping Indra. Other scholars try to find the solution of the Varuṇa riddle in the religion of the pre-Aryan population of India. According to SEGERSTEDT,<sup>71</sup> the Aryans used *asura* as a name for the native Indians and their gods, and Varuṇa belongs

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<sup>60</sup> Über die altindische Göttin Dhiṣāṇā (1917) p. 125 ff.

<sup>61</sup> Trilogie altindischer Mächte III (1937) p. 199 ff.

<sup>62</sup> PISCHEL-GELDNER, Vedische Studien II (1892—97) p. 124 f, GGA 1895 p. 447 ff.

<sup>63</sup> Varuṇa und die Urgeschichte der Inder, WZKM 33 (1926) p. 4 ff.

<sup>64</sup> Gudstroms uppkomst (1914) p. 164 ff; Germ. transl.: Das Werden des Gottesglaubens (1916) p. 173 f.

<sup>65</sup> Der arische Weltkönig (1923) p. 113 ff and passim.

<sup>66</sup> Ouranós-Vāruṇa (1934) p. 39 ff.

<sup>67</sup> Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (1932) p. 125 ff.

<sup>68</sup> Die Aməša Spəntas (1916) p. 139 ff.

<sup>69</sup> The moral deities of Iran and India, The American Journal of Theology 21 (1917) p. 72 ff.

<sup>70</sup> Trita Āptya (1927) p. 7 ff.

<sup>71</sup> Les asuras dans la religion védique, RHR 57 (1908) p. 167, 187 ff.

to these gods together with Rudra, Pūṣan and the Maruts, the gods of the Cāturmāsya-sacrifices. PRZYLUŚKI,<sup>72</sup> finally, claims that originally Varuṇa is an austro-asiatic sea-god, called Bharu. In the culture of the Indus valley this god has acquired the traits of a king, *asura*, and among the Aryans he has been connected with the sky.

Amidst such a lot of various interpretations, we must first state that the Vedic texts do not give us any clear-cut picture of Varuṇa. Seeing, that the Vedic Varuṇa has so many traits of various kinds, it seems wise to regard him as a syncretistic god. Syncretism has been the most characteristic feature of Indian religion throughout its history. We find no indisputable clues, however, when trying to trace the various pre-Vedic origins of Varuṇa. As to his character of sky-god, it must be said that in the Vedic texts Varuṇa does not represent the sky, even though sometimes in one way or another he is connected with it. The frequently accepted opinion that in pre-Vedic, Aryan religion he has been a sky-god, who later in the Veda has lost his distinctive traits, has its main foundation in the etymological identification of Varuṇa and Οὐρανός.<sup>73</sup> But as said above, this etymology is uncertain. The mention of a name resembling that of Varuṇa in the Boghaz-köi finds does not permit any definite conclusions, either.<sup>74</sup> Varuṇa's companionship with Mitra, appearing there and characteristic for him in the Veda, may be regarded as an Aryan trait, however. The development that may have made an Iranian Ahura Mazdāh out of an Indo-Iranian Varuṇa will not be discussed here. It does not seem justifiable, however, to draw any direct conclusions from this Iranian conception to the character of the Vedic Varuṇa.

Can Varuṇa, then, be traced to pre-Aryan India? It would

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<sup>72</sup> Varuṇa, god of the sea and the sky, JRAS 1901 p. 613 ff, The three factors of Vedic culture, IC 1 (1934—35) p. 379 f.

<sup>73</sup> Cf BOHNENBERGER, Der altindische Gott Varuṇa (1898) p. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Cf above p. 3 f.

be highly interesting, could the excavations in the Indus valley tell us something regarding this. As a matter of fact, some combinations may be ventured, but it must be admitted that they are rather vague. Characteristic for Varuṇa in the Veda is first of all the fact that he is the king, watching the laws and punishing the sinners who cannot escape his all-seeing eye and his spies.<sup>75</sup> As the king among the gods, he is also especially connected with the coronation ritual, Rājasūya.<sup>76</sup> Thus he seems to belong to an ordered civilization like that of the Indus valley more than to the barbarian, warlike Aryans, of whom Indra is a more representative god. Further, Varuṇa is the god of the purifying waters, a trait gradually becoming more dominating in his character.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps we may combine this fact with the finds of many bathrooms and a big official bath in Mohenjo-daro.<sup>78</sup> Varuṇa is also through his central place in the Cāturmāsya-sacrifices<sup>79</sup> a god of vegetation. In the religions of the Near East the king was intimately connected with vegetation,<sup>80</sup> and with these civilizations the Indus culture has had close communications.<sup>81</sup> Lastly, it may be mentioned that Hrozný, whose interpretations of the Indus script, however, cannot be regarded as final truths, claims to find the name of a god Jaē on several seals from Mohenjo-daro and Harappa.<sup>82</sup> As he means also to find other Indus divinities identical with

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<sup>75</sup> E. g. RV I. 25, VII. 87, AV IV. 16. When Varuṇa is interpreted as a sky-god, his spies are believed to be the stars. It is quite unnecessary, however, to give the spies such an interpretation. As a king, Varuṇa uses spies, just as earthly kings.

<sup>76</sup> HILLEBRANDT, *Ritual-litteratur* p. 143 f; DUMEZIL *op. cit.* p. 61 ff.

<sup>77</sup> E. g. RV VII. 49, AV VII. 83, ŚB IV. 4. 5. 10 and XII. 9. 2. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Cf above p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> HILLEBRANDT *op. cit.* p. 115 ff.

<sup>80</sup> See e. g. HOCART, *Kingship* (1927) p. 55 f; ENGNELL, *Studies in divine kingship* (1943) p. 16 ff, 52 ff.

<sup>81</sup> Varuṇa's relations to these civilizations are stressed by COOMARASWAMY, *Yakṣas II* (1931) p. 27.

<sup>82</sup> *Inschriften und Kultur der Proto-Indier II*, Arch. Or. 13 (1942) p. 38 ff.

divine names from the Near East, he connects Jaë with Yahweh. In Indian religion he connects Jaë with Viṣṇu because of some footprints, found on a seal, which should correspond to the three steps of Viṣṇu, mentioned in RV. Perhaps we may venture a guess that if there has been a god Jaë he has given some traits to Varuṇa. This might be a way of explaining the many similarities between Varuṇa and Yahweh that have often been commented upon.<sup>83</sup> As to the line drawn from Jaë to Viṣṇu we may observe that Viṣṇu has probably inherited many of his royal traits just from Varuṇa.<sup>84</sup>

In the present study I am especially interested in what the Vedic literature has to say about Varuṇa as an evil-minded god and of salvation from him.<sup>85</sup> In the preceding chapter I have quoted passages speaking of deliverance from the snare sent by him. Sometimes, however, we find passages mentioning deliverance directly from Varuṇa. In AV IV. 16. 4 we read: "Also who should creep far off beyond the sky, he should not be delivered from king Varuṇa (*mucyātai varuṇasya rājñah*)."<sup>86</sup> Because *mucati* is used mostly with the ablative, it seems probable that an ablative, from the snare, is understood to the genitive, king Varuṇa.<sup>86</sup> In AV I. 10. 3, however, we have *mucati* with Varuṇa in the ablative: "If thou hast spoken untruth (*anṛta*) with thy tongue, much evil (*vrjina*), I deliver (*mucāmi*) thee from the truthful (*satyadharman*) king, from Varuṇa (abl.)", and in the following stanza we hear of the actual sufferance: "I deliver thee from the universal (*vaiśvānara*), the great flood (*aṇaya*)", i. e. the disease sent by

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<sup>83</sup> See e. g. VODSKOV, Sjøledyrkelse p. 314; SCHROEDER, Arische Religion I p. 321; GRISWOLD, The religion of the R̥gveda p. 112.

<sup>84</sup> Cf COOMARASWAMY op. cit. p. 35 f.

<sup>85</sup> Many references to Vedic texts speaking of Varuṇa as a dark and terrifying god are given in J. J. MEYER op. cit. III p. 205 ff. Cf also OTTO op. cit. p. 181.

<sup>86</sup> In st. 8 of the same hymn *varuṇa* probably stands for *varuṇapāṣa*. JOHANSSON op. cit. p. 128.

Varuṇa, dropsy.<sup>87</sup> In RV X. 97. 16, quoted above p. 38, we hear of deliverance from *varuṇya*, that which pertains to Varuṇa. In AV VIII. 7. 10 the herbs to which the hymn is directed are called *unmuñcati* and *vivaruṇa*, delivering and driving Varuṇa away.

The Brāhmanas deal much more with Varuṇa as a dark and dangerous god than do the Saṃhitās. There, too, we hear of deliverance from *varuṇya*. One example, ŚB XII. 7. 2. 17, has been quoted above (p. 39 f). Another example is ŚB IV. 4. 5. 11. where in the same way *varuṇya* is paralleled with *varuṇapāśa*: "He thus delivers (*pra-muñcati*) him from every fetter of Varuṇa (*varuṇapāśa*), from everything which pertains to Varuṇa (*varuṇya*)". The purifying bath, Avabhṛtha, with which I shall deal in chapter VI, is called *varuṇya* in ŚB II. 5. 2. 46 and IV. 4. 5. 10. In both passages the purpose of the bath is said to be to deliver from Varuṇa: *nirvaruṇatāyai*. Further sin (*enas*) is said to be *varuṇya* in the comments on a confessional prayer in ŚB XII. 9. 2. 4. "He delivers (*muñcati*) him from *varuṇya enas*", it is said. Sin is something "that concerns Varuṇa", the moral ruler and punisher. In ŚB II. 5. 2. 20, too, we have to do with confession of sin. There a woman who commits adultery is said to commit *varuṇya*, the word here being used not together with any word for sin but as a synonym of them.

In ŚB XII. 7. 2. 17 Varuṇa is said to seize (*grhṇāti*), i. e. to inflict evil. In a similar way he is said to inflict evil in ŚB IV. 5. 7. 7. There we find not the verb *grhṇāti* but *ā-ṛcchati*, and Varuṇa is called *ārpayitr*, "inflicter". It is certainly no accident that Varuṇa is connected with this verb, as his own name gives a point of contact: the element *ar*, the root of the verb in its stronger form. In its weaker form the root appears in the name of the law that Varuṇa protects, *ṛta*. It appears also in Nirṛti, who as a dangerous divinity is often mentioned together with Varuṇa. Finally, *ārta* in the Upaniṣads signifies

<sup>87</sup> WHITNEY AV p. 10.

the evil character of the world as distinguished from the indivisible Ātman. Such phonetic combinations are most typical for the Vedic texts.

The most remarkable passage on Varuṇa in ŚB is XIII. 3. 6. 5. In the Avabhrtha of the Aśvamedha an obscure figure appears, called Jumbaka. He is said to be Varuṇa. He is white (*śukla*), bald-headed (*khalatu*), he has protruding teeth (*viklidha*) and reddish brown eyes (*piṅgākṣa*).<sup>88</sup> "That is Varuṇa's form (*rūpa*). By that form he thus delivers himself from Varuṇa (*varuṇam avayajate*)." Here a man with outstandingly ugly traits represents Varuṇa, and the purpose of the rite is to be quit of Varuṇa, "sacrifice him away".

Thus we see how the Vedic Varuṇa, who in RV is mainly a noble, elevated god, is also, and especially in the Brāhmaṇas, an evil-minded, terrifying god, from whom man wants to be delivered. There need be no contradiction between these two sides of his character. In a parallel way the God of Jews and Christians is as well love as wrath. The love of Varuṇa, however, is not very prominent. The relation to law and justice dominates even in the texts speaking of his benevolence, and this feature is the main trait of Varuṇa, uniting the various aspects of him. As the punisher he is feared and abhorred together with his punishment.

In his terrifying aspects Varuṇa shows many resemblances to Rudra.<sup>89</sup> We find them together e.g. in ŚB II. 3. 2. 9 f: "Now when it (the fire) is first kindled, and there is as yet nothing but smoke, then indeed it is Rudra. He who desires to consume food — even as Rudra seeks after these creatures, now e.g. with distrust, now with violence, now in striking them down — let him offer then. He who knowing this, offers then, obtains that food. And when it burns rather brightly, then it is Varuṇa. He who desires to consume food — even as Varuṇa

<sup>88</sup> On the epithets, see EGGELING in SBE 44 p. 343. On the rite, see JOHANSSON op. cit. p. 125 f.

<sup>89</sup> Cf BERGAIGNE, *La religion védique* III p. 156.

seeks after these creatures, now e.g. seizing on them, now with violence, now in striking them down — let him offer then. He who, knowing this, offers then, obtains that food.”

Rudra has been interpreted in various ways. The most important treatise on him is by ARBMAN, Rudra (1922), where also earlier attempts to interpret Rudra as a god of the thunderstorm, etc. are reviewed (p. 282 ff). ARBMAN sees in Rudra a god of the common people, who in the priestly RV has been “celestified”. His real popular nature is that of a wild and primitive god of death, a prince of demons. After ARBMAN, among others OTTO, LOMMEL and HAUER have discussed the character of Rudra.<sup>90</sup> OTTO<sup>91</sup> distinguishes between an Aryan Rudra = Wuotan and an un-Aryan, Dravidian god. LOMMEL<sup>92</sup> sees in Rudra exclusively an un-Aryan god, whom he, as a German of the Nazi epoch, heartily detests. HAUER<sup>93</sup> regards Rudra as a great Aryan god, mainly benevolent. Both OTTO and LOMMEL refer to the finds in the Indus valley. As has been said above p. 2, the archæologists have found in Mohenjo-daro a prototype of the Hindu god Śiva, and the contacts between Rudra and Śiva are fairly well established.<sup>94</sup>

There are in the Veda many signs that Rudra has been regarded as a terrifying god to a higher degree than as a benevolent one. The hymns of RV as a rule avoid him. When sometimes prayers to him appear they have an anxious tone: “May the weapon of Rudra spare us, may the great disgrace (*durmati*) of the Mighty One disappear” (RV II. 33. 14).<sup>94a</sup> In the other Vedic texts we hear more of him. The anxiety that is

<sup>90</sup> Cf also WIKANDER, *Der arische Männerbund* (1938) p. 69 ff.

<sup>91</sup> *Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier* (1932) p. 16, 56, and passim.

<sup>92</sup> *Die alten Arier* (1935) p. 125 ff. Cf *Der arische Kriegsgott* (1939) p. 16.

<sup>93</sup> *Glaubensgeschichte der Indogermanen I* (1937) p. 174 ff.

<sup>94</sup> See e.g. ARBMAN op. cit. p. 310; GHOSH, Śiva, his pre-Aryan origin, *IC 2* (1935—36) p. 768 ff. Contrary opinion in PURI, *La civilisation de Mohen-jo-daro* (1938) p. 104.

<sup>94a</sup> Cf BLOOMFIELD, *Rig-Veda repetitions* (1916) p. 573.

felt in front of him is expressed by giving him all kinds of names and epithets. He is everywhere, as especially the famous Śatarudriya (VS XVI, TS IV.5 etc.) describes. Among the many Rudra-names we find also "lord of the forests" (*araṇyānām pati*), but this does not prove very much about his character, as we hear another time of Rudra dwelling in the village (*grāmasad*).<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, it is indisputable that Rudra has closer connections with the forest than with the village.<sup>96</sup> And as the forest is the place for the meditative life, Rudra-Śiva is the special god of the yogins. The name that may be said to be especially characteristic for Rudra is "lord of the animals", *paśupati*. In a long hymn directed to him, AV XI. 2, this epithet appears thrice (5, 11, 28) and we also often find it elsewhere. *Paśu* may mean wild as well as tame animals (cf e. g. RV X. 90. 8). Above p. 41 I have touched the importance of the word in the terminology of salvation. We see now, e. g. in AV XI. 2, that the word is especially connected with Rudra.<sup>97</sup> St. 24 brings the wild animals into consideration: "To thee are assigned the forest animals (*āraṇyāḥ paśavaḥ*), the beasts in the wood (*mṛgā vane*), the geese, eagles, hawks, birds." The fact that Rudra is thus associated with wild animals may be combined with the appearance of animals on the Śiva-seal from Mohenjo-daro. In the same AV-hymn, XI. 2, we hear the anxious tone, e. g. in st. 26: "Do not, O Rudra, unite us with the fever (*takman*), not with poison, not with the fire of heaven. Elsewhere than on us make that lightning fall." In other texts *paśu* signifies the cattle that shall be protected from Rudra. So in ŚB XIII. 3. 4. 3: "He thus shields (*antar-dadhāti*) the cattle (*paśu*) from Rudra. Whence Rudra does not prowl (*abhi-manyate*) after the cattle (*paśu*), where this oblation is offered at the Aśvamedha." When in ŚB V. 3. 3. 9 Varuṇa gets the

<sup>95</sup> ARBMAN op. cit. p. 224.

<sup>96</sup> Op. cit. p. 25 ff.

<sup>97</sup> As in the Śaiva Siddhānta Śiva is the god who delivers *paśu* from its fetters, we find here a connecting link between Rudra and Śiva.



characteristic epithet "lord of the law (*dharmapati*)", Rudra is called "lord of the cattle (*paśupati*)" (V. 3. 3. 7), and he is said to "quicken the sacrificer for cattle (*paśubhyaḥ suvati*)". Rudra may further, like Varuṇa, punish sin, even if this is not a regular function with him as with Varuṇa. ŚB I. 7. 4. 1—3 relates that Prajāpati wanted to have sexual intercourse with his own daughter. The gods regarded this as a sin (*āgas*). "The gods then said to this god who rules over the animals (*paśunām iṣṭe*): 'This one transgresses the law (*atisaṁdham carati*) who acts thus towards his own daughter, our sister. Pierce him!' Rudra, taking aim, pierced him." AB III. 33 relates the same episode but avoids mentioning the name of the dreaded god, a fact best explained from the natural reluctance against speaking a terrifying word.<sup>98</sup>

Varuṇa and Rudra are the Vedic gods that arouse the greatest fear. Indra and other mighty gods may also be terrifying, but they are not feared in the same way, and there is no talk of deliverance from them. There is, however, a third Vedic divinity that may be ranked with Rudra and Varuṇa as especially evil-minded: Nirṛti. Her name means destruction (from *nis-ṛcchati*)<sup>99</sup> and sometimes it is doubtful whether the texts speak of destruction in an impersonal sense or of a goddess. So e. g. when we read in RV I. 24. 9 the prayer to Varuṇa: "Drive far away Nirṛti. Deliver (*pra-mumugdhi*) us from committed sin (*enas*)". ARBMAN<sup>1</sup> calls Nirṛti one of the most concretely conceived divinities of Vedic time, and interprets her as a goddess of death and of the world of the dead below the earth. Although

<sup>98</sup> According to GELDNER, Yama und Yami, Gurupūjakaumudī (1896) p. 20 f, Rudra is, without being mentioned, the punisher of sexual sin in RV X. 10. 2, too, but the arguments are not convincing. In Der Rigveda in Auswahl II (1909) p. 146, GELDNER himself is not so sure of this interpretation, founded on SĀYAṆA's commentary.

<sup>99</sup> So PW IV col. 187, cf I col. 401 f. Cf OTTO, Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier (1932) p. 63: *nirṛti* = "ṛtalos, Chaos".

<sup>1</sup> Tod und Unsterblichkeit im vedischen Glauben, ARW 26 (1928) p. 210 f, cf Rudra p. 261 f.

the goddess is less clearly depicted than ARBMAN asserts, there is no doubt that she is characterized by her connections with death.<sup>2</sup> Nirṛti is also a goddess of the earth, and as such a one she has by SPEYER<sup>3</sup> been connected with Nerthus of ancient Germanic religion, although the etymological identity is not complete. It seems more prolific to connect her with goddesses from countries not so far away from India, with the Great Mothers, well-known as well from the religions of the Near East<sup>4</sup> as from later Hinduism.<sup>5</sup> Also the Indus religion knows this Great Mother, to whom the dove is a characteristic attribute.<sup>6</sup> Now we find in the Veda the dove (*kapota*) as an inauspicious bird,<sup>7</sup> in RV X. 165. 1 (= AV VI. 27. 1) and AV VI. 29. 2 appearing as the messenger of Nirṛti. If consequently there are some reasons to believe that the Vedic Nirṛti has inherited certain traits from the Great Mother, worshipped in the Indus religion, it must be noted that these are only the destructive traits. To other Vedic divinities<sup>8</sup> have been applied the positive sides of

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<sup>2</sup> CALAND, *Altindisches Zauberritual* (1900) p. 42, speaks of Nirṛti as a personification of death. Likewise LÉVI, *La doctrine du sacrifice* (1898) p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> Eene Indische verwante van de Germaansche godin Nerthus (1902).

<sup>4</sup> PRZYLUCKI has written several essays on the appearance in India of the Great Mother of the Near East. In one of them, *La Grande Déesse*, *Muséon* 49 (1936) p. 293 ff, those written earlier by him are mentioned p. 310. Later have appeared: *Les Aśvin et la Grande Déesse*, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic studies* 1 (1936) p. 129 ff; *From the Great Goddess to Kāla*, *IHQ* 14 (1938) p. 267 ff; *Ursprünge und Entwicklung des Kultes der Muttergöttin*, *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1938 p. 11 ff. P. regards Aditi as the Vedic form of the Great Mother. Cf on this subject also AGRAWALA, *Aditi and the Great Goddess*, *IC* 4 (1937—38) p. 401 ff.

<sup>5</sup> ZIMMER, *Die indische Weltmutter*, *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1938 p. 175 ff.

<sup>6</sup> See above p. 2 and further MACKAY, *The Indus civilization* (1935) p. 84; *AIA* 1935 (1937) p. 22 f.

<sup>7</sup> Cf J. J. MEYER, *Trilogie* III p. 206.

<sup>8</sup> So e.g. speaks VS X.23 directly of Mother Earth (*prthivī mātṛ*). Cf also SPEYER op. cit. p. 18 and above n. 4.

the Great Mother, who is a goddess of life, death and returning life.

In the passage from RV, quoted just above, Varuṇa is asked to drive Nirṛti away. In RV VI.74.2 a similar prayer is directed to Soma-Rudra. We observe that the evil-minded gods appear together with one another. In RV X.59.4 death (*mṛtyu*) and Nirṛti appear as parallel conceptions. Together with the evil-minded Rakṣasas, Nirṛti is mentioned in RV X.76.4: "Crush the betrayful Rakṣasas, drive Nirṛti away, keep off misery (*amati*)", a prayer directed to the press-stones of the Soma sacrifice.

As we may expect, AV speaks much more of deliverance from Nirṛti than RV. I shall not quote more than one instance, which is of special interest, as in it a form of *muñcati* is used. It is the refrain of AV II.10: "From *kṣetriya* (a disease), from Nirṛti, from imprecation of sisters (*jāmiśamsa*), from Druh do I deliver (*muñcāmi*) thee, from Varuṇa's fetter (*pāśa*).". Among the evil things among which Nirṛti appears here, especially "the sisters" should be observed. As in AV II.7.2, quoted above p. 54, they are probably female demons.

From VS the following interesting formula should be quoted (XII.62—65): "Seek him who does not press the Soma, who does not sacrifice. Follow the path of the thief (*stena*) and the robber (*taskara*). Seek another way than ours. This is thy way. To thee, O Goddess Nirṛti, be homage. To thee, sharp-pointed Nirṛti, be homage. Loosen (*vi-cṛtā*) this iron bond (*bandha*). Lift him up to the highest vault of heaven together with Yama and Yamī. Thou dreadful One, in whose mouth I offer to get delivered (*ava-sarjanāya*) from these bonds (*bandha*), thou whom people praise as Earth (*bhūmī*), I know thee everywhere as Nirṛti. The fetter (*pāśa*) which the goddess Nirṛti hath fastened on thy neck and which cannot be loosened (*a-vi-cṛtya*), I loosen (*vi-syāmi*) from thee as from the midst of life (*āyus*). Set forth, eat this food. Homage be to Bhūti (prosperity) who hath done this." In this text it should be especially observed

that people are said to praise Nirṛti as the earth (*bhūmi*).<sup>9</sup> But it is a question of the earth only as connected with death. Life and prosperity are the contrasts of Nirṛti. Homage is paid to Nirṛti in order that she might disappear.

This VS-text, belonging to Agnicayana, is commented upon in ŚB VII. 2. 1, where Nirṛti is explicated with the general word for evil, *pāpman*. In VII. 2. 1. 15 the sacrificer is said to be delivered (*pra-mucyate*) from Nirṛti's fetter (*pāśa*). The ceremony ends with the returning home of the sacrificer, who should not look backwards. "Thus he leaves *pāpman* Nirṛti" (VII. 2. 1. 17). The same rule of not looking back appears in connection with sacrifices to Varuṇa<sup>10</sup> and Rudra<sup>11</sup> and with funeral ceremonies.<sup>12</sup>

There is a tendency in the Brāhmaṇas, especially in ŚB, to diminish the importance of the gods. The priests are said to be gods just like the heavenly gods (e. g. ŚB II. 2. 2. 6), and the gods are said to have acquired their immortality through the sacrifice (see below p. 92). Furthermore, the gods are explained as being nothing but human organs. In ŚB XII. 9. 2. 12 Mitra and Varuṇa are said to be the two main breaths, *prāṇa* and *apāṇa* respectively. In ŚB XI. 6. 3. 1 ff (= Bṛh. III. 9. 1 ff) Yājñavalkya successively reduces the gods from a number of 3003 to the one god that is *prāṇa*. In the Upaniṣads this tendency is still more prominent than in the Brāhmaṇas. Under such circumstances we cannot expect to hear much of protection and deliverance from evil-minded gods in these texts.

Nirṛti does not at all appear in the principal Upaniṣads.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The verse in which this is said appears with slight differences also in other Vedic scriptures, e. g. AV VI. 84. 1.

<sup>10</sup> HILLEBRANDT, Ritual-litteratur p. 183 f.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit. p. 119.

<sup>12</sup> See e. g. ŚB XII. 5. 2. 15 and DONNER, Pinḍapitṛyajña (1870) p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> JACOB, A concordance p. 499, gives the word only in Mahānārāyaṇa-up. II. 8.

Varuṇa and Rudra appear a few times, however. The dark character of Varuṇa remains apparent, as well as his connections with water. In Chānd. II. 22. 1 various chants are assigned to various gods. The false one (*apadhṛvānta*) belongs to Varuṇa and ought to be avoided (*varjayet*). The connection with water is mentioned in Brh. III. 9. 16 and 22. Both Varuṇa and Rudra appear in an enumeration of that which Brahman created, in Brh. I. 4. 11: "Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu, Īśāna." Otherwise we hear of Rudra only in Śvet. This Upaniṣad is remarkable for its theistic ideas, and the god praised in it is Rudra-Śiva. Śvet. III. 5—6 quote VS XVI. 2—3. which speak of Rudra as the benevolent (*śiva*) god, and give thus a good illustration of the procedure through which the Vedic Rudra becomes the Śiva of Hinduism.

We hear nothing in the Upaniṣads of fear for the gods, however, or of deliverance from them, as we do in the ritual texts. The meditative life of the hermits is concentrated on the inner life, and the gods are regarded as created, outside beings, when they are not identified with various organs. In the Upaniṣads the sacrifice is abandoned and with it its gods.

Dealing with Nirṛti, I observed that it is often difficult to decide whether her name stands for the goddess, or simply for destruction in an impersonal sense. We find the same ambiguity with several diseases to which I now proceed. They are often represented by divinities, whom we may call demons of disease. A general name for sickness is *amīvā*. In AV VII. 84. 1 Agni is said to deliver (*pra-muñcat*) from all diseases (*amīvā*). As other evil things and persons, sickness belongs preeminently to darkness, to the night,<sup>14</sup> and consequently especially Agni, the fire, and Sūrya, the sun, are able to deliver from diseases. The

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<sup>14</sup> In all Vedic texts night and darkness often appear as evil things. Night (*rātrī*) is said to be evil (*pāpman*) in SB II. 3. 1. 6, and the same is said of darkness (*tamas*) in SB VII. 2. 1. 2.

following prayer is directed to Sūrya: "Sūrya, with the light with which thou chaseth darkness (*tamas*) and moveth the whole world with thy splendour, drive away (*apa-suva*) every feeble and false sacrifice, sickness (*amīvā*), evil dream (*duḥ-svapnya*)" (RV X. 37. 4). But also other gods have the same power. Brahmanaspati is called a slayer of sickness (*amīvahan*) in RV I. 18. 2. Soma gets the same name in RV I. 91. 12. The Aśvins have a high reputation as physicians: "May the Aśvins, the two heavenly physicians (*bhiṣaja*), bring us prosperity, may they drive away (*yuyuyātām*) weakness (*rapas*) and enemies (*sridh*)" (RV VIII. 18. 8). The word *rapas*, as many other words for evil things, by SĀYANA glossed with *pāpa*, seems to mean physical weakness, without further specification.

Sometimes a special form of sickness is mentioned. Thus Sūrya in RV I. 50. 11 is asked to drive away jaundice, where the connection with the yellow colour of the sun is easily seen: "Rising this day, thou great friend, ascending higher in the heavens, remove (*nāśaya*) the disease of my heart (*hṛdroga*) and my jaundice (*harimāṇa*), O Sūrya." As Varuṇa is especially connected with water, he sends and delivers from dropsy. RV VII. 89 is a touching prayer by one struck with this disease: "Thirst found thy singer when he stood in the midst of waters. Be gracious, mighty lord, and spare" (4). In the story of Śunaḥśepa Varuṇa is said to seize Aikṣvāka so that his belly swells (AB VII. 15).

*Yakṣma* is a disease appearing frequently especially in AV. In RV X. 161. 1 (= AV III. 11. 1), the ṛṣi says that he delivers (*muñcāmi*) the sick person from different kinds of *yakṣma*, and he prays Indra-Agni to deliver (*pra-mumuktam*) him from Grāhī, another name of a disease. Another verse where *Yakṣma* and Grāhī occur together is AV II. 10. 6: "Thou hast been delivered (*amukthāh*) from *Yakṣma*, from disaster (*durita*), from curse (*avadya*), thou hast been delivered from the fetter of Druh and from Grāhī." *Takman*, fever, is often mentioned. "Do thou, O *Takman*, avoid us", the ṛṣi cries in AV I. 25. 1—3,

and in AV VI. 20. 2 Takman is put on a line with Rudra and Varuṇa: "Homage be to Rudra, homage to Takman, homage to Varuṇa, the brilliant." Another frequent name of a disease is *kṣetriya*. In AV II. 8. 1 two stars are called the releasers (*vicṛt*) with power to loosen (*vi-muñcatām*) the fetters (*pāśa*) of *kṣetriya*. In AV II. 31—32 worms appear as evil beings causing disease, and in AV V. 13. 6 *vi-muñcati* is used in such a connection.<sup>15</sup>

In the Upaniṣads we do not hear much of disease. When it appears, it is mentioned as a part of human life, which is wholly an evil thing. Thus we find the classical Sanskrit word for disease, *roga*, used together with death (*mṛtyu*) and pain (*duḥkhatā*) in a stanza quoted in Chānd. VII. 26. 2, and with *jarā*, old age, and *mṛtyu*, death,<sup>16</sup> in Śvet. II. 12. All these evils disappear for the wise man who has duly practised his *yoga* and sees the Unity of everything.

Together with the words of malady, other words for suffering or disaster appear, some of which I shall briefly review. Often we meet compounds with the first parts giving the evil sense, especially compounds with *dus*, a prefix well-known from Greek *δυσ*. The most frequent of these compounds seems to be *durita*. The meaning of this word is somewhat vague: something that has gone (*ita*) evil. Sometimes it refers to committed sin (RV I. 23. 22 = RV X. 9. 8). Usually we may translate it generally as mishap, disaster, etc. In the word are included committed sin as well as outward disaster, evils not clearly distinguished. In RV VI. 50. 10 the ṛṣi prays to the Nāsatyas: "As from great darkness (*tamas*) ye delivered (*amumukta*) Atri, so protect (*tūrvatam*), ye Men, from disaster (*durita*)."

In RV VI. 47. 30 (= AV VI. 126. 2) *durita* has another compound with *dus* as its parallel: *ducchunā*, i. e. *dus* and *śuna*, a

<sup>15</sup> AV furnishes good material for the study of ancient Indian medicine. Cf BLOOMFIELD, *The Atharvaveda* p. 58 ff.

<sup>16</sup> The edition of Bibliotheca Indica, p. 820, has *duḥkha*, pain, instead of *mṛtyu*.

not frequent word for prosperity. But I am not going to review all the compounds with *dus*, which are fairly numerous. They signify all sorts of threats and dangers, from which the ṛṣis want to be protected. Of some interest, however, it may be to mention *dusvapnya*, evil dream, a kind of evil which is evidently most earnestly feared. We have already met it in a prayer to the ascending sun. In RV VIII. 47. 14 the ṛṣi prays to Uṣas, the dawn, wanting to put every evil dream on the scapegoat Trita: "Daughter of Heaven, the dream that bodes evil (*dusvapnya*) to our kine and to us, carry that, O shining One, far away to Trita Āptya."<sup>17</sup> A third time a similar prayer is directed to a third divinity of the morning, Savitr (RV V. 82. 4).

The prefix *abhi* gives its compound a sense of direction towards something, and consequently such compounds often express evil persons or things from which the ṛṣis want to be delivered or protected. We have *abhimāti*, evil plot or plotter,<sup>18</sup> e. g. in RV IX. 65. 15 where Soma is called a slayer of *abhimāti* (*abhimātihan*), and *abhihrut* (cf the simple *hvaras* RV II. 23. 6) in RV I. 128. 5 in the same sense. *Abhidruh* sounds similarly, but it is not used in stanzas speaking of deliverance or protection. In RV I. 122. 9 *abhidruh* qualifies an evil man who betrays Mitra and Varuṇa at the sacrifice.

In the Samhitās the most frequent word among the compounds with *abhi* is *abhiśasti*, calumny, curse (from *śamsati*, speak solemnly). This brings me to one of the most important among the evil things in the Veda, the curse.<sup>19</sup> Spells and imprecations

<sup>17</sup> Cf RÖNNOW, Trita Āptya p. 45 ff.

<sup>18</sup> PW I col. 342 and GRASSMANN WB col. 84 derive *abhimāti* from *manyate*, think, but the *ā* is a difficulty. Easier should it be to derive it from *mā*, *mimīte*, measure, cf *māyā*. (On the derivation of *māyā* cf HEIMANN, Deutung und Bedeutung indischer Terminologie, Atti d. XIX Congr. int. d. Orient. p. 287 f). But on the other hand the verb *abhi-manyate* is frequent (see e. g. AV VI. 6. 1, ŚB XIII. 3. 4. 3), while *abhi-mimīte* does not appear in a corresponding sense.

<sup>19</sup> On the power of the sacred words see e. g. HAUG, The Aitareya Brāhmaṇam I (1863) p. 75; HEIMANN op. cit. p. 284.



are mighty powers, much used and much feared. They have power not only in normal human life. Indra has delivered (*amuñcat*) the waters from *abhiśasti*, so that they can flow (RV X. 30. 7, cf X. 104. 9). In RV VII. 13. 2 Agni is said to have delivered (*amuñcaḥ*) the gods from *abhiśasti*. But naturally the ṛṣis are most concerned with the curses directed towards themselves. In RV VIII. 66. 14<sup>20</sup> they pray to Indra: "Deliver (*ava-spr̥dhi*, SĀYANA glosses *avamocaya*) us from this misery (*āmati*)<sup>21</sup> and hunger (*kṣudh*) and curse (*abhiśasti*)." In AV VII. 53. 1 *abhiśasti* appears side by side with death: "When thou, O Bṛhaspati, didst release (*amuñcaḥ*) from Yama's other world existence, from malediction (*abhiśasti*), the Aśvins bore back death (*mṛtyu*) from us."

Beside *abhiśasti* we meet several other words expressing evil and dangerous speech. *Sāpatha* is an ordinary word for curse, although in RV met with only once. Rather frequent is *avadya*.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> VIII. 55 when the Vālakhilya-hymns are excluded.

<sup>21</sup> Opinions differ as to whether *amati* should be regarded as a negated *mati*, thought, or as a derivation from the root *am*, from which we have *amivā*, sickness, etc. SĀYANA seems to be at variance with himself when glossing *amati* in RV VIII. 66. 14 with *dāridrya*, poverty, and *amati* in *amativan* in RV VIII. 19. 26 (cf above p. 32) with *aśobhanā buddhiḥ*, a vicious mind. GRIFFITH follows the second of the two interpretations when translating *amati* in the first passage by "misery", *amativan* in the second one by "feel hunger" (The hymns of the Rigveda II p. 210 resp. 147). When GELDNER, Der Rigveda p. 389, translates *amati* in RV IV. 11. 6 with "Gedankenarmut" he evidently connects the word with *mati*. This derivation is vindicated in BERGAIGNE, Études sur le lexique du R̥g-veda, JA 8. 3 (1884) p. 525; NEISSER, Zum Wörterbuch des R̥gveda I (1924) p. 77; RAJVADE, Words in R̥gveda, Annals of the Bhandark. Orient. res. inst. 10 (1930) p. 147 f. On the other hand PW I col. 368 and GRASSMANN WB col. 90 derive the word from the root *am*. — That in the Vedic texts the word has given associations in both directions is clear from the fact that sometimes it appears together with *durmati*, evil thought, e. g. RV IV. 11. 6, SB IX. 2. 3. 8, sometimes with words for hunger, e. g. *kṣudh* in RV VIII. 66. 14, *aśanāyā* in SB IX. 2. 3. 8.

<sup>22</sup> TRENCKNER, A critical Pāli dictionary I (1924 ff) p. 158 *anavajja* and p. 451 *avajja*, explains *avadya* as secondarily formed from *anavadya*,

In AV V. 6. 8 and XII. 2. 47 we find it together with *durita*. In RV III. 31. 8 Indra is said to have delivered (*nis-amuñcat*) his friends from *avadya*. With the synonym *nīd* we meet it in RV IV. 4. 15: "Consume (O Agni) the cursing Rakṣasas, protect (*pāhi*) us, O rich in friends, from Druh, from blame (*nīd*), from calumny (*avadya*)." *Nīd* does not seem to appear outside RV,<sup>23</sup> but in classical Sanskrit we have the related words *nindati*, to blame, and the substantive *nindā*.<sup>24</sup> In Avesta we hear of blaming (*naēd-*) the demons (*daēva*).<sup>25</sup> In RV II. 34. 15 the Maruts are said to help their friends to pass over trouble (*aṁhas*), and to deliver (*muñcatha*) from blame (*nīd*). Also in RV IX. 29. 5 *nīd* appears with a form of *muñcati*.

It should finally be mentioned that in AV the dangerous spell is often called *kṛtyā*, more seldom *kartra*. These words and others of the same kind do not only mean the words, but the whole hostile magic, sometimes evidenced in effigies.<sup>26</sup> AV X. 1. 32 is directed towards such witchcraft, ending with the words: "As the sun is freed (*mucyate*) out of darkness (*tamas*), and quits the night and the ensigns of the dawn, so do I quit (*jahāmi*) all evil-natured magic (*kartra*) made by the witchcraft-maker (*kṛtyākṛt*)."

None of the words mentioned in the last pages appear in the Upaniṣads. In the forest-life the enemies are others than curse, etc.

I am not going to continue this review of Vedic expressions of enemies, maladies, curses, etc. any further, though the

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which should be an haplology from *\*anavavadya*, not to be spoken down, criticized.

<sup>23</sup> PW IV col. 148.

<sup>24</sup> PW IV col. 147 f, col. 156.

<sup>25</sup> BARTHOLOMAE col. 1034; NYBERG, *Irans forntida religioner* p. 305, Germ. transl.: *Die Religionen des alten Iran* p. 273.

<sup>26</sup> BLOOMFIELD, *The Atharvaveda* p. 65 f; HENRY, *La magie dans l'Inde antique* (1904) p. 159 f, 170 f.

material could easily be amplified. I have only mentioned some representative words and preferably quoted passages where they appear with forms of *muñcati*. We cannot say, however, that *muñcati* is used more than other words in these connections. We find it especially in AV, when the ṛṣis want to deliver their clients from diseases. Synonyms appear sometimes, *ava-sṛjati*, *vi-syati*, etc. More frequent, however, are words of protection, *rakṣati*, *pāti*, etc. There is no special terminology with *muñcati*, but this word is used as a normal word for "loosen, release", along with other words.

The examples given show how the Vedic Indian loved his earthly life and how he saw himself surrounded by many evils. There were thieves and robbers, who wanted to take away his cattle. There were diseases, which were sent by human sorcerers, demons or gods, or which were themselves demons. Such things are mentioned extremely often in the Saṃhitās, almost not at all in the Upaniṣads. The Brāhmaṇas take an intermediary position, but stand much nearer to the Saṃhitās. Imprecations against personal enemies are very common in them, expressed in a most uniform manner. And we find in them much fear of diseases, demons, and evil-minded gods.

It is evident that these facts cannot be explained by saying that the Upaniṣads represent a later period than the other parts of the Veda. Even if the Upaniṣads are of a later origin than the rest of the Veda, it would be unreasonable to presume that the time in which they were composed, did not know and fear the same kinds of evil as earlier times. There has never been any time in India, when personal enemies, diseases, curses, have not been the subject of prayers for deliverance and protection.<sup>27</sup> Even when the battles between invaders and native

<sup>27</sup> The Vedic word *rakṣas* is e.g. still frequently used in India of demons. See e.g. BRUGGS, *The Chamārs* (1920) p. 133. Cf also PRZYLUCKI, *Der Lebendig-Erlöste in dem entwickelten Buddhismus*, *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1937 p. 118.

Indians stopped, the words for enemy etc. did not become devoid of content.

The difference between various Vedic texts regarding the attitude towards enemies etc. must be seen from the aspect of the different character of the texts. *Samhitās* and *Brāhmaṇas* are ritual texts, intended for the social life of the village, the *Upaniṣads* are meditative texts, intended for the solitary life in the forest. In the *gṛhastha*-stage a Brahman should marry, carry the responsibilities for wife and children, perform sacrificial rites. He prays for deliverance from his personal enemies: rival Brahmins and others, and he has to pray also for the protection of those, who use his offices, from their enemies, hostile kings, etc. Disease threatens his own home and the homes of his clients. He has to recite prayers and spells in order to drive away the demons sending the diseases. He uses curses, but he has also to protect himself and his clients from hostile curses.

When the time is due, the householder leaves his home and becomes a forest-dweller, living alone or together with other hermits in the forest. He now abandons all social responsibilities and prepares himself for death. He has none of the evils of this life to fear. He has no properties which may be stolen by thieves. Disease does not matter, when he is prepared for death. Thus the evils that he has feared as a householder do not frighten him any longer, and he has no reason to pray for deliverance from them. Other things are in his mind when he thinks over deliverance.

In this way the fundamental differences of the attitudes towards enemies, diseases, etc. in the Vedic texts are best explained. On the other hand, it should not be denied, of course, that the historical development has also had great influence. The *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads* reflect a time of more settled conditions than the times of invasion, when many *Samhitā*-hymns came into being. They, and the whole *āśrama*-system, must be the products of lives with plenty of leisure for other things

than the immediate threats of life. Probably from the earlier inhabitants of India the Aryans learnt the methods of meditation, and on this foundation a system was created, ending in a stage of life, when the evils of ordinary life were not feared.

#### IV.

## DEATH

Enemies can kill and death is the ultimate consequence of disease. Thus death is nothing essentially different from the evil forces reviewed in the last chapter. But the ideas of death and of deliverance from death are so important in the Vedic literature that they must be dealt with in a separate chapter. I shall not, however, deal with the detailed ideas of death and the destinies of man after death, with heaven and hell,<sup>1</sup> etc., but shall stick to the ideas of deliverance. What do the Vedic texts mean when speaking of deliverance from death?

The hymns of RV do not speak very much of death and deliverance from it. BENDANN<sup>2</sup> writes that death is frequently mentioned in RV, but that is much exaggerated. The normal word for death is *mṛtyu*, which has clear Indo-European relations: Lat. *moriōr*, etc.<sup>3</sup> This word appears only in eleven RV-hymns.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, we find *mṛtyu-bandhu*, "subject to death", in two hymns.<sup>5</sup> Of these thirteen hymns all but two are found in the tenth maṇḍala. The two stanzas outside that maṇḍala are RV VII. 59. 12 and VIII. 18. 22. In RV VII. 59. 12,

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<sup>1</sup> On these things see e.g. ARBMAN, Tod und Unsterblichkeit im vedischen Glauben, ARW 25 (1927) p. 339 ff, 26 (1928) p. 187 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Death customs (1930) p. 37. B. refers to three passages, two of which are wrongly indicated.

<sup>3</sup> WALDE-POKORNY II p. 276.

<sup>4</sup> GRASSMANN WB col. 1060.

<sup>5</sup> The contrast, *amṛta-bandhu*, is used as an epithet of the gods in RV X. 72. 5.

a stanza which by GRASSMANN<sup>6</sup> is regarded as a later addition to the hymn, *mṛtyu* is used together with a form of *mūñcati*: "May I be delivered from death, not from immortality (lit. not-death, *mṛtyor mukṣīya māmṛtāt*)".<sup>7</sup> RV VIII. 18. 22 runs: "We human beings, who are subject to death (*mṛtyubandhu*), O Ādityas, lengthen graciously our lives that we may live." In the tenth maṇḍala we find a prayer of similar content (RV X. 59. 4): "Do not give us up to death (*mṛtyu*), O Soma, let us see the rising sun. May our old age be kindly with passing days. Let Nirṛti get away." Nirṛti, destruction, signifies the same evil as death (cf above p. 69). In the famous Hiraṇyagarbha-hymn, RV X. 121 (cf AV IV. 2) we find in st. 2 the same contrast, *mṛtyu-amṛta*, as in the quoted stanza from maṇḍala VII, but here not used with any expression for deliverance: "His shade is *amṛta* and *mṛtyu*." Whether here and in other passages it is correct to render *amṛta* and its derivative *amṛtatva* with "immortality", as is usually done, seems doubtful.<sup>8</sup> The death that is feared, when in the hymns the ṛṣis want to be delivered from this evil, is the abrupt death before old age, a premature death. The contrast of this is a long life, a life to old age which consequently may be called *amṛta*. Sometimes, however, *amṛta* leads the thoughts to a life after death, e. g. in RV IX. 113. 8 ff. Often the word is used as a characteristic of the gods. But it may also signify the continued life of a man in his offspring, as in a prayer found in RV V. 4. 10:

<sup>6</sup> GRASSMANN, Rigveda I p. 555. Likewise MÜLLER, Vedic hymns I (1891) p. 389.

<sup>7</sup> GRASSMANN supposes *amṛta*, "O immortal one". PISCHEL, Védica, ZDMG 40 (1886) p. 121 ff, proposes *mā mṛtāt*, "may I not die". These proposals are rejected by MÜLLER op. cit. p. 389. SB II. 6. 2. 12 comments on this line: "Blessed is he who is delivered from death, not from immortality (*mṛtyor mucyātai nāmṛtāt*)."

<sup>8</sup> Cf BERGAIGNE, Études sur le lexique du Rîg-veda, JA 8.3 (1884) p. 536; MÜLLER op. cit. p. 381; BOYER, Étude sur l'origine de la doctrine du saṃsāra, JA 9.18 (1901) p. 453 ff; NEISSER, Zum Wörterbuch des Rgveda I (1924) p. 79 ff; MASSON-OURSSEL, L'Inde antique (1933) p. 158 f.

"May I reach *amṛtatva* in my offspring." Our word "immortality" is likely to give associations that are not always justifiable in the Vedic texts. A more suitable translation of *amṛta* would often be simply "life". The disadvantage thereof is the fact that there is another word for "life", *āyus*. Furthermore, such a translation does not reflect the construction of the word *a-mṛta* as the negation of death. "Freedom from death" seems to be a translation that fairly well comprises the different nuances of the word without giving any false associations. In any case, in this chapter we must fix our attention not only on the sense of *mṛtyu*, but also on that of its contrasts.

Sometimes in RV death is indicated even when the word *mṛtyu* is not used. So e.g. in RV VII.89.1, where the ṛṣi, struck with dropsy, prays to Varuṇa: "Let me not go down into the house of clay", i.e. die. When RV X.97.16 (cf above p. 38) says that the herbs may deliver (*muñcantu*) from various evils, among them Yama's fetter (*padbīṣa*), death is meant. Yama is a king of the dead. In RV X.165.4 he is directly said to be *mṛtyu*: "To that Yama Mṛtyu be homage." While Yama has a rather rich mythology,<sup>9</sup> *mṛtyu* has as a rule no personal sense, however.<sup>10</sup>

In AV the attitude towards death is mainly the same as in RV. But we hear a good deal more of it. Thus e.g. the AV-hymns sometimes speak of several deaths, i.e. different ways of dying. For a dying man the following words are uttered in AV III.11.5: "Enter in, O Prāṇa and Apāṇa, as two draft-oxen a pen. Let the other deaths (*mṛtyu*) go away (*vi-yantu*), which

<sup>9</sup> See SPIEGEL, *Die arische Periode* (1887) p. 243 ff; EHNI, *Der vedische Mythos des Yama* (1890) passim; ARBMAN op.cit. ARW 25 p. 380 ff, 26 p. 221 ff.

<sup>10</sup> COOMARASWAMY, *Notes on the Kāṭha Upaniṣad*, NIA 1 (1938—39) p. 48, writes: "Death (*mṛtyu*, *yama*) is throughout the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, as also in RV, one of the highest names of God." Such a statement is misleading, even though some passages may be found, especially in the Upaniṣads, where Mṛtyu is treated as a high divinity.



they call the remaining hundred.”<sup>11</sup> The hundred and first death, which is welcomed, is the death in old age after a full life. AV II. 28. 4 has been used as a prayer for a little child:<sup>12</sup> “Let Father Heaven and Mother Earth in concord give thee death in old age (*jarāmṛtyu*) that thou mayest live in the lap of Aditi, guarded by *prāṇa* and *apāna* a hundred years.” This death which ends a full life, estimated to a hundred years, is not an evil. The evil deaths which should be “the remaining hundred” are said to be a hundred and one in AV VIII. 2. 27: “The deaths (*mṛtyu*) that are a hundred and one, the perditions (*nāṣṭra*) that are to be overpassed (*atitārya*), from them may the gods deliver (*muñcantu*) thee, from Agni Vaiśvānara.” Here *mṛtyu* appears with a form of *muñcati*. This is not unusual in AV. AV VII. 7. 13 hopes that the herbs shall deliver (*muñcantu*) from *mṛtyu* and *aṁhas*, these two evils occurring side by side. The snares of death (*mṛtyupāśa*) are mentioned together with a form of *muñcati* in AV VIII. 8. 16. In AV VIII. 1. 4 the snare of death is called *mṛtyohpadbīśa*. RV X. 97. 16, speaking of Yama’s *padbīśa* and quoted above, appears several times in AV, e. g. VI. 96. 2. Yama is often mentioned also elsewhere in AV, in AV VII. 53. 1 with a form of *muñcati*: “When thou, O Bṛhaspati, didst deliver (*amuñcaḥ*) from Yama’s other-world existence (*amutra-bhūya*), from malediction (*abhiśasti*), the Aśvins bore back death (*mṛtyu*) from us, O Agni, physicians of the gods, mightily.” The praise of Yama Mṛtyu, quoted above from RV X. 165. 4, returns in AV VI. 28. 3, VI. 63. 2, VI. 84. 3. Death is praised in order that it might stay away until its due time, just as Nirṛti in a Yajus-text quoted above p. 70. In the same way AV VIII. 1. 1 praises death, calling it Antaka, the Ender: “To Antaka Mṛtyu be homage.”

In the Samhitās death usually means nothing more than the too early death that snatches man away from his social life.

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<sup>11</sup> As to the many deaths, cf references in WHITNEY AV p. 104.

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit. p. 68.

But sometimes we see the philosophic speculation touching it. I have already quoted RV X. 121. 2 = AV IV. 2. 2. We find *mṛtyu* also in other speculative Samhitā-texts. In AV XI. 4. 11 *prāṇa* is *takman*, fever, and *mṛtyu*. In the remarkable *ucchiṣṭa*-hymn, AV XI. 7, everything is identified with *ucchiṣṭa*, the remnants of the sacrifice.<sup>13</sup> Death appears in st. 3: "In the *ucchiṣṭa* are the being one (*san*) and the non-being one (*asan*), both, death (*mṛtyu*), vigor (*vāja*), Prajāpati." AV XI. 8 is an obscure hymn of creation, in which st. 33 says that by his first dying (*pramāra*) man is divided into three parts. This gives a hint of the idea of a repeated death, of which the Brāhmanas tell us more. — When death is mentioned in such speculative hymns, we never hear of deliverance from it, however.

As an example of the use of *amṛta* and *amṛtatva* in AV a verse from the funeral hymn AV XVIII. 3 may be quoted: "Let Vivasvat<sup>14</sup> set us in life (*amṛtatva*). Let death (*mṛtyu*) go away. Let not-death (*amṛta*) come to us. Let it protect these men until old age. Let not their life-breaths (*asu*) go to Yama" (62). In this verse *amṛta* and *amṛtatva* mean nothing more than a long terrestrial life for the mourners. In AV II. 28. 4, quoted above, we saw such a full, long life estimated to a hundred years.<sup>15</sup>

In the Brāhmanas we find *mṛtyu* very frequently mentioned as a great evil, from which the sacrifice can deliver. Often we meet the expression *mṛtyu pāpman*, death the evil. I give an example from the laying of the *spṛt*-bricks in the Agnicayana-ritual. The verb *spṛṇoti* means "deliver", and so the rite is

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<sup>13</sup> DEUSSEN, AGP I. 1 p. 306 f, understands *ucchiṣṭa* in a less ritualistic sense: "was übrig bleibt, wenn wir alle Formen der Erscheinungswelt in Abzug bringen", "welches übrig bleibt wenn wir alle Welten, alle Wesen, alle Opfer u. s. w. hinwegdenken".

<sup>14</sup> The father of Yama, who is called Vaivasvata in e. g. RV X. 14. 1.

<sup>15</sup> See further e. g. RV I. 89. 9. BOYER op. cit. p. 454 ff, gives still other examples.

said to deliver from evil. This evil is *pāpman mṛtyu*: "Prajāpati became pregnant with all beings. Whilst they were in his womb Pāpman Mṛtyu seized them. He said to the gods: 'With you I will deliver (*spr̥navāni*) all these beings from Pāpman Mṛtyu.' 'What will accrue to us therefrom?' 'Choose', said he. 'Let one part be to us', said some to him. 'Let lordship be to us', said others. Having bestowed a share on some and lordship on others, he delivered (*aspr̥not*) all beings from Pāpman Mṛtyu. Inasmuch as he delivered them, these bricks are called *spṛt*. In the same manner, the sacrificer bestows a share on some, lordship on others, and delivers (*spr̥noti*) all beings from Pāpman Mṛtyu" (ŚB VIII. 4. 2. 1—2). This text speaks of death as a great evil, as a power, hostile to man. The sacrifice, represented in the text by Prajāpati, can deliver from it. The text does not further elucidate the sense of this deliverance, being more interested in the relations between the sacrifice and the gods. So it does not give us any clear idea of what this evil, death, concretely means to man.

Sometimes *mṛtyu* means very concretely the premature interruption of life, thus having the meaning that we have found to be the normal one in the Samhitās. In ŚB V. 4. 1. 1 we find the same mention of various deaths as we have met above in texts from AV: "He who performs the Rājasūya is delivered from (*ati-mucyate*) all deaths (*mṛtyu*), all murderous blows (*badha*). Old age (*jarā*) becomes his death (*mṛtyu*)." Here the evil from which the sacrificer is delivered is the premature death, of which there are many kinds. Death in old age is normal and no evil. We observe, that a form of *muñcati* is used to express the deliverance.

The Brāhmaṇa-texts give a much richer content to the conception of death than the Samhitās do, however. Of special interest is the idea of a death in the next life, a recurring death. In AV XI. 8. 33, quoted above p. 85, we have found a hint of this idea. In the Brāhmaṇas we find much more mention of this death, and it has there a definite name, *punararmṛtyu*.

This idea of a death appearing in a future life in another world<sup>16</sup> is not unique for India. BENDANN<sup>17</sup> gives examples of the same conception among the Melanesians, who have probably not got it from India. In India this idea may have served as a stage in the development of the idea of man being born to a new life on earth in a cycle of existences (*samsāra*),<sup>18</sup> and not least because of this, it requires special attention.

In ŚB X. 2. 6. 19 we read: "Hunger ceases through food, thirst through drink, evil (*pāpman*) through prosperity, darkness through light, death (*mṛtyu*) through not-death (*amṛta*). Who-soever knows this, from him all these pass away, and he conquers (*apa-jayati*) recurring death (*punarmṛtyu*) and attains the full life (*sarvam āyus*)."

In the same tenth book of ŚB, the rather obscure Agnirahasya, the mysterium of the Agni-altar, we find *punarmṛtyu* and *amṛta* contrasted in 1. 4. 14: "What is done here in Agni (the altar), whereby the sacrificer conquers *punarmṛtyu*? He who builds Agni, becomes that deity Agni. Agni is *amṛta*." Agni is an immortal god, but the sacrificial altar is Agni, too. By means of building this altar man is made divine, free from death. As the main evil from which he is in this way delivered, the recurring death is mentioned. Of the concrete meaning of this death the text does not say anything, merely giving the word.

*Mṛtyu* and *punarmṛtyu* are further mentioned in ŚB X. 5. 1. 4: "This speech is yonder sun and that is death (*mṛtyu*). Hence whatsoever is on this side of the sun all that is held by death. And he who builds it (the altar) on this side thereof builds it

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<sup>16</sup> COOMARASWAMY, On the one and only transmigrant, JAOS suppl. 3 (1944) p. 28, asserts that *punarmṛtyu* "is not some one other death to be dreaded as ending a future existence, but together with *punarbhava* or *janma*, the condition of any form or type of contingent existence." This interpretation cannot be accepted.

<sup>17</sup> BENDANN op.cit. p. 162. Cf WIDENGREN, Religionens värld (1945) p. 325.

<sup>18</sup> See below p. 109, 115 f.

as held by death, and he surrenders his Self (*ātman*) to death. But he who builds it thereabove conquers (*apa-jayati*) recurring death (*punarmṛtyu*), for by his knowledge (*vidyā*) it is built thereabove." When the text says that everything on earth is held by death, we may think of normal death, ending every human life. The text wisely says nothing of conquering this death. But a correct building of the Agni-altar conquers the death awaiting man in the next life, *punarmṛtyu*. Over this death the sacrifice and its priests have power, being able to deliver from it.

This idea of deliverance from a recurring death appears in ŚB not only in the books dealing with the Agni-altar. In the ritual of Agnihotra we read in ŚB II. 3. 3. 7—8: "Now yonder burning (sun) is no other than death (*mṛtyu*). And because it is death, therefore its creatures that are on this side of it, die. But those that are on the other side of it are the gods, and they are therefore free from death (*amṛta*) . . . And whosoever goes to yonder world not having escaped (*anātimucya*) that death, him it causes to die again and again in yonder world." Paragraph 9 describes how one shall perform the Agnihotra in order to be delivered from *mṛtyu*, and ends by speaking of *punarmṛtyu*: "This is the deliverance (*atimukti*) from death in Agnihotra: and he who knows that deliverance from death in the Agnihotra is delivered from (*ati-mucyate*) the recurring death (*punarmṛtyu*)." We have the same ideas here as above. Death is the lord of human life: all creatures die. This text speaks, however, more openly of conquering death, but the real sense of it appears in the last words. The sacrifice does not deliver from the normal human death, only from the recurring death, that threatens man in his future existence. This death shall be overcome already before going to yonder world, e. g. through the Agnihotra. He who has not correctly performed his sacrifice will die again and again in yonder world.

Similar expressions of *punarmṛtyu* appear in the concluding books of ŚB which have the character of additions, dealing

with various rituals. Thus we find in the ritual of Mitravindā the following words (ŚB XI.4.3.20): "He finds Mitra, and his is the kingdom, he conquers (*apa-jayati*) recurring death (*punar-mṛtyu*) and gains full life (*sarvam āyus*), whosoever knowing this performs this sacrifice, or whosoever thus knows it." According to EGGEING's comment, SBE 44 p. 66, *punar-mṛtyu* should here indicate the "mundane existence and its constantly repeated round of birth and death", from which the sacrificer should be delivered by his approaching death. This does not seem very probable. The idea of the cycle of existence, from which man can be delivered in death, appears in the Upaniṣads, and I will soon deal with it. But in this text that conception does not seem to be involved. Here probably the recurring death means only a new death or repeated new deaths in the heavenly world as in the Brāhmaṇapassages quoted above.

The ritual of Sautrāmaṇī speaks of conquering *punar-mṛtyu* even for the cattle and the departed fathers (ŚB XII. 9.3. 11—12). The object is in every way to show the power of the sacrificial rite and the sacrificial knowledge. They have the power of delivering not only the sacrificer himself from the new death in the other world, but also his cattle and his fathers from the same threatening death. The deceased fathers belong to the life of man in the same way as the cattle belong to it. A father expects his son to perform the due sacrifices for him when he is dead.

I have taken all the Brāhmaṇa-examples from ŚB, which deals much more with these things than the other Brāhmaṇas do. From those I only mention TB III. 11.8, the well-known story of Death and Naciketas, known especially through the Kāṭha-upaniṣad. Naciketas goes to Mṛtyu and obtains from him three boons. The first one is the permission to return to his father. The second one is the lesson that sacrifices and good works (*iṣṭāpūrte*) have their abode in the Nāciketa-fire. These merits do not perish for him who builds that altar. The third

request of Naciketas is the conquest of *punararmṛtyu*. The answer is also here the lesson of the Nāciketa-fire. "He who builds the Nāciketa-altar and who knows this, he conquers (*apa-jayati*) recurring death (*punararmṛtyu*)."

As in the Saṁhitās, so in the Brāhmaṇas *amṛta* and *amṛtatva* are the words that are most frequently used to express the contrast of death. Further, *sarvam āyus*, a full life, is frequently used, too. Before entering on an examination of the content of these words in ŚB, I just want to bring to mind the well-known introduction to the story of Śunaḥśepa. There, in AB VII. 13, the begetting of sons is praised: "A debt he pays in him and freedom from death (*amṛtatva*) he attains, that father who sees the face of a son born living." Here *amṛtatva* means the continuance of life, not in another world, but in the life of a son in this world.

In ŚB *amṛta* is sometimes said to mean nothing but a full life of a hundred years, i. e. not dying before old age, just as we have seen it to be the case in the Saṁhitās. In ŚB X. 1. 5. 4 it is directly stated that *amṛta* means a hundred years. But it is somewhat bewildering when the same passage says that *amṛta* is "unending and everlasting" (*ananta, aparyanta*). The passage shows that the conception of *amṛta* is not very clear. Different ideas are brought together, and the texts do not contain a finally fixed system.

Sometimes *amṛta* is said to be characteristic of the gods, while *sarvam āyus* is contrasted to it as meaning only a full life on earth, attainable for human creatures. In ŚB II. 1. 3, in the ritual of Agnyādhāna, the establishment of the sacred fires, we read that the gods live in the north, the deceased fathers in the south. The text goes on: "When the sun moves northwards, then one may set up his fires. The gods have evil (*pāpman*) dispelled (*apahata*) from them. He (the sacrificer) therefore dispels evil from himself. The gods are free from death (*amṛta*). He therefore though there is for him no prospect of freedom from death (*amṛtatva*), attains the full life (*sarvam*

*āyus*) whosoever sets up his fires during that time. Whosoever, on the other hand, sets up his fires, when (the sun) moves southwards, he does not dispel evil from him, since the fathers have not evil dispelled from them. The fathers are mortal (*martya*). Hence he dies before (he has attained the full) life (*āyus*), whosoever sets up his fires during that time" (4). The evil from which the gods but not the fathers are delivered, is evidently death, and because both gods and fathers live in another world we have to think of the recurring death, *punar-mrtyu*. But this death is of the same kind as the premature death in this world. The aim of the rite is to deliver from such a death and to give a full life. The sacrificer is said not to be able to reach *amṛtatva*. As we shall see this is not the usual attitude of ŚB.

In other texts we hear that as a matter of fact man is able to reach *amṛta*. But this position is not taken easily. With the Indian habit of not abandoning old ideas for the new ones we can find assured in the same passage both that man cannot become *amṛta* and that he can. In ŚB II. 2. 2. 14 the priests are pondering over a deeper sense of the Agnyādhāna: "The gods then established that (fire) in their innermost soul (*antar-ātman*). And having established that immortal element (*amṛta*) in their innermost soul, and become immortal and unconquerable, they overcame their mortal, conquerable enemies. And so this one (the sacrificer) now establishes that immortal element in his innermost soul. And though there is for him no hope of freedom from death (*amṛtatva*), he obtains full life (*sarvam āyus*). For indeed, he becomes unconquerable, and his enemy, though striving to conquer, conquers him not. And, accordingly, when one who has established his fires and one who has not established his fires vie with each other, he who has established his fires overcomes the other, for he thereby becomes unconquerable, free from death (*amṛta*)". The last word, *amṛta*, comes as a surprise, as it has been said just before that for the sacrificer there is no hope of *amṛtatva*.



There is no difference in meaning between *amṛta* and *amṛtatva*. Yet it is certainly not by chance that the text ends by declaring that the sacrificer becomes *amṛta*. The tendency of the passage is to explain the great power of the sacrifice. It gives human prosperity, victory over foes. The gods, whom the priests want to subordinate under the sacrifice and themselves, have not yet lost their characteristic of being free from death in contrast to men. But the priests want to deprive them of this significance, and so they very carefully end their passage by saying that man can become *amṛta*, just as the gods.

Many ŚB-texts discuss how man can become *amṛta*, like the gods. In ŚB X. 4. 3 we hear that not the whole man can become immortal. He must leave the mortal part of him, the body, behind.<sup>19</sup> The text relates a myth of death and the gods. To render ideas in mythical form is a frequent habit of the Brāhmaṇas. Death is called the year, the ender, Prajāpati, appellations explicable from the fact that every year brings man nearer to death, which ends human life. The gods are afraid of this Prajāpati, Year, Ender, Death. This, too, is very natural, as the priests want to subordinate the gods under the sacrifice. Consequently the gods must perform sacrifices in order to become free from death. They perform Agnihotra, the New and Full Moon Sacrifices, the Seasonal Offerings, the Animal Sacrifice, the Soma Sacrifice, but all in vain. By means of these rites they are not delivered from death. Then they build an Agni-altar, but not in the correct way. At last Prajāpati-Death himself has to teach them how to build his forms, i. e. the altar. "And the gods laid down accordingly, and thereafter became free from death (8). Death spake unto the gods: 'Surely, in this wise all men will become free from death, and what share will then be mine?' They spake: 'Henceforward no one shall

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<sup>19</sup> Cf above p. 34 the quotation from ŚB XI. 2. 6. 13 that speaks of the mortal body (*martya śarīra*) as evil (*pāpman*).

be free from death with the body (*śarīra*). Only when thou shalt have taken that as thy share, he who is to become free from death either through knowledge (*vidyā*), or through holy work (*karman*) shall become free from death after separating from the body.' Now when they said 'either through knowledge or through holy work', it is this Agni-altar that is the knowledge, and this Agni-altar is the holy work (9). And they who so know this, or they who do this holy work, come to life (*sambhavanti*) again when they have died, and coming to life, they come to a life free from death (*amṛtatvam abhi-sambhavanti*). But they who do not know this, or do not do this holy work, come to life again when they die, and they become the food of him (death) time after time."

It is interesting to see in this text that the priests of the Agnicayana deny the value of other sacrifices. Only by building the Agni-altar in a right way can freedom from death be obtained. The tendency of subordinating the gods under the sacrifice is the background of the statement that the gods are not free from death from the beginning but obtain this freedom only through the Agnicayana. But still there is some difference between the gods and men as to the freedom from death. So this text speaks of the body of man. The whole man can never become free from death. The body becomes the share of death. Now we are concerned with the normal death, the dissolution of the body. Freedom from death can be won only after this dissolution. We must note that life after death is regarded as a good thing. The reward of the wise man is that this life shall be *amṛta*, i. e. not threatened by a new, recurring death. The fools become the food of death again and again.

ŚB has more to say of how man reaches deliverance from death and of the relations between the sacrifice and death. In ŚB X. 1. 3. 1 ff Prajāpati is not called death as in the preceding quotation. He creates death as the consumer of the mortal part of the creation. The main interest of the text is to fix the relations between what is mortal and what immortal. "Prajā-

pati created the creatures (*prajā*). From the outward breathings (*ūrdhva prāṇa*) he created the gods, and from the downward breathings (*avāṇc prāṇa*) the mortal creatures. And over the creatures he created Death (*mṛtyu*) as consumer. Now, one half of that Prajāpati was mortal, and the other half immortal. With that part of him which was mortal he was afraid of Death. Being afraid, he became two-fold, clay and water, and entered this (earth). Death spake unto the gods saying: 'What has become of him who has created us?' — 'Being afraid of thee, he has entered this (earth)', they said. He spake: 'Let us search for him, let us gather him up for I shall not injure him'. The gods gathered him from out of this (earth). That part of him which was in the water, they gathered as water, and that which was in this (earth) as clay. Having gathered together both clay and water they made a brick. Thence a brick consists of both clay and water. And, indeed, these five forms of him were mortal: the hair, the skin, the flesh, the bone, and the marrow. And these were immortal: the mind (*manas*), the voice, the breath (*prāṇa*), the eye, and the ear. Now, that Prajāpati is no other than the Fire altar which is here built up, and what five mortal parts there were of him they are these layers of earth. And those which were immortal they are these layers of bricks. The gods spake: 'Let us make him immortal (*amṛta*)'. Having encompassed that mortal form by those immortal forms of his they made it immortal — the layer of earth by means of two layers of bricks; in like manner the second, the third, and the fourth (layers of earth). And having laid down the fifth layer (of bricks) he (the priest) scatters earth on it. Thereon he lays the Vikarṇi and the Svayamātrṇṇā, scatters chips of gold, and places the fire. That is the seventh layer, and that (part) is immortal. And in this way, having encompassed that mortal form of his by those two immortal forms, they made it immortal — the layer of earth by means of two layers of bricks. Thereby, then, Prajāpati became im-

mortal. And in like manner does the sacrificer become immortal by making that self (*ātman*) (of the altar) immortal."

In this text the problem of mortality and immortality is discussed in a way that reminds one of the way in which similar problems are raised in other religions. We may think of Greek distinctions between the psychical parts of man as immortal and the physical parts as mortal, or of Biblical questions as to how Jesus as a mortal man can at the same time be an immortal God and of how mortal man shall be able to attain an immortal shape. In the ŚB-text everything is concentrated on the building of the Agni-altar. This altar is the bearer of immortality, and a myth explains how it has come to be so. Prajāpati is the creator, but he is himself a prototype of man. Like man he is threatened by death, and like man he has the chance of becoming free from death. Deliverance from death is gained only by the building of the Agni-altar. In order to give this freedom from death to Prajāpati and his creatures, i. e. man, the gods build the altar. With this text the preceding quotation should be compared. The parts are changed. There Prajāpati instructs the gods, how to build the altar and be delivered from death, here the gods make Prajāpati free from death by building the altar, i. e. himself. By the altar now man obtains the chance of becoming free from death. The text seems to assert that the altar delivers even the mortal parts of man from death, another opinion than the one expressed in the preceding quotation, in which it is said that the body cannot become *amṛta*.

In ŚB X. 1. 4. 1 it is directly said that the body becomes *amṛta* together with the immortal parts of man,<sup>20</sup> which are here said to be the breaths (*prāṇa*): "Now at the beginning, Prajāpati was both these, the mortal (*martya*) and the immortal (*amṛta*). His *prāṇas* alone were immortal, his body mortal. By

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<sup>20</sup> Cf further e.g. ŚB IV. 6. 1. 1: "With his whole person (*sarvatanu*) the sacrificer comes into existence in yonder world." But life in yonder world is not of itself immortal.

this sacrificial performance (*karman*) (Agnicayana) and by this order of proceeding, he made his body uniformly undecaying (*ajara*) and immortal (*amṛta*). In like manner is the sacrificer both the mortal and the immortal. His *prāṇas* alone are immortal, his body mortal. By this sacrificial performance, and by this order of proceeding, he makes his body uniformly undecaying and immortal." The following paragraphs identify the different layers of brick and the soil scattered over them with the immortal and mortal elements of man, respectively. Immortal are the different *prāṇas*: *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna*, *samāna*, *vāc*.<sup>21</sup> The mortal elements are marrow, bones, sinews, flesh, fat, blood and skin. In 8 it is declared more explicitly than in the parallel ŚB X. 1. 3. 7 that by means of Agnicayana the sacrificer makes his whole self (*ātman*) free from death. The object of the text is to stress the power of the sacrifice to deliver even the body from death.

Immortality, with or without the body, i. e. a life threatened by no death, a life unending and everlasting, is to come to the wise man in the next life. In this life the sacrifice prevents only a premature death, thus preserving man until death in old age. In the next life it delivers from the recurring death. These two things are intimately connected. He who has lived a full life on earth, and he alone, gains immortality in heaven. The Brahmins are very anxious to stress that it is a duty to live a full life. "Whosoever builds a one hundred and one-fold (altar), or whosoever lives a hundred years, he indeed, obtains that freedom from death (*amṛta*). Therefore, whether they know it, or whether they do not, people say: 'The life of a hundred

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<sup>21</sup> Cf DEUSSEN, AGP I. 1 p. 294 ff, I. 2 p. 238 ff, 248 ff; EWING, The Hindu conception of the functions of breath, JAOS 22 (1901) p. 249 ff; GARBE, Die Sāṃkhya-Philosophie, 2. Aufl. (1917) p. 318; OLDENBERG, Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmana-Texte p. 65 ff, 284; ARMBAN, Untersuchungen zur primitiven Seelenvorstellung II, MO 21 (1927) p. 3 ff. — I have preferred not to translate the Indian terms, as there are no proper equivalents for them.

years makes for heaven (*lokya*).’ Hence one ought not to yield to his own desire and pass away before (attaining) the full life (*āyus*), for that does not make for the heavenly world (*alokya*)” (ŚB X. 2. 6. 7). The next paragraph ends with the words: “He alone who lives a hundred years or more attains to that freedom from death (*amṛta*).” It is in accordance with the Vedic system that the ideas of life as something evil appear only in the Upaniṣads. Such ideas are not in their proper place in the ritual life.

This double power of the sacrifice is clearly expressed in ŚB X. 2. 6. 19: “Whosoever knows this conquers recurring death (*punarmṛtyu*) and attains full life (*sarvam āyus*).”<sup>22</sup> And let him hold this to be freedom from death (*amṛta*) in yonder world (*amutra*) and life (*āyus*) here (*iha*).” We see here that in the Brāhmaṇas the use of the term “full life (*sarvam āyus*)”, is not definitely fixed. It may signify a full life on earth contrasted to the immortal life of the gods, as above p. 90 f. It may also signify the life that is attained when the recurring death is conquered, as above p. 87. Here it is said to comprise both a full life on earth and freedom from the recurring death in heaven. We have repeatedly seen that these two things are intimately connected.

Proceeding to the Upaniṣads we find the different purpose of these texts influencing the opinions on the deliverance from death. In the Brāhmaṇas the power of the sacrifice to conquer premature death and recurring death is shown. The hermits, for whom the Upaniṣads are intended, leave the sacrifice behind. They do not fear disease or death threatening to interrupt their lives too early. But the normal death of old age has drawn nearer, and their thoughts are much concerned with the

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<sup>22</sup> In ŚB X. 6. 1. 4—11 the knowledge of Vaiśvānara is said to give the result that man “conquers *punarmṛtyu* and attains *sarvam āyus*”, and this expression returns seven times.

problems of death and the destiny of man after death. The words *mṛtyu* and *amṛta* are central in the Upaniṣads. Brh. I. 3. 28 is often quoted as a motto of the Upaniṣads: "From the unreal (*asat*) lead me to the real (*sat*), from darkness lead me to light, from death (*mṛtyu*) lead me to not-death (*amṛta*)."<sup>23</sup> The next words of the Upaniṣad explain that the utterance on death and not-death comprises the two others. "From death lead me to not-death", the text further continues, "there is nothing there that seems obscure." To this we may object that as a matter of fact the ideas of *mṛtyu* and *amṛta* are not so clear, as the Upaniṣad claims. The quoted texts have shown that such is the case in ŚB. We are now going to examine what the Upaniṣads teach on this point.

The beginnings of Brh. are in many ways similar to such Brāhmaṇa-texts as have been met with above. In connection with meditation on the Aśvamedha, Brh. I. 2. 7 says: "He (who knows this) conquers recurring death (*punarmṛtyu*), death (*mṛtyu*) obtains him not, death becomes his *ātman*."<sup>23</sup> Especially the last words make the text apt for meditation. Death is not simply an evil to be delivered from. The context even speaks of it as the one divinity (*eka devatā*) and of how man becomes this divinity.

The expression "the evil, death (*pāpman mṛtyu*)" is met with e. g. in Brh. I. 3. 10 f. In 12 ff we find *mṛtyu* connected with a form of *muñcati*: *ati-amucyata*. Speech, smell, eye, ear, mind were through *prāṇa* delivered from death, becoming respectively fire, wind, sun, quarters of heaven, moon. The deliverance from death is obtained by the knowledge of the identities between cosmos and man.

In Brh. III. 1 the first question that is put to Yājñavalkya in a long discourse is this: "Since everything here is overtaken

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<sup>23</sup> The same words occur in ŚB X. 6. 5. 8 with the additions: "he goes to full life (*sarvam āyus*)" and "who knows this".

(*āpta*) by death (*mṛtyu*),<sup>24</sup> since everything is overcome (*abhipanna*) by death, whereby is a sacrificer delivered from (*atimucyate*) the grasp of death?”, and Yājñavalkya answers: “By the Hotṛpriest, by fire, by speech. Speech is the Hotṛ of sacrifice. That which is this speech is this fire, is the Hotṛ. This is deliverance (*mukti*), this is complete deliverance (*atimukti*)” (3). The following paragraphs speak of deliverance (*mukti*, *atimukti*) from day and night and from the waxing and waning moon, and it is said that *mukti* means ascent to the heavenly world (*svarga loka*). Also ŚB speaks of day and night as death, and in the same way the waxing and waning moon represent death as the life-devouring time. In this way life and death may be identified. Life consumes itself and is consequently the same evil as death. Everything is stamped by death. Salvation (*mukti*) must mean deliverance from life as well as from death. According to this text this salvation can be found in heaven, *svarga loka*. Furthermore we note that the speculation starts with the sacrifice and the sacrificial terms, interpreting them in a non-ritualistic way. The Hotṛpriest is speech.

There is nothing important in the Upaniṣads that is said only once or twice. So the statements of death as giving every form of life its stamp are numerous. Thus e. g. Brh. III. 2. 10 says that everything is the food of death and speaks in familiar Brāhmaṇa-terms of overcoming *punarmṛtyu*. Brh. IV. 3. 7—8 speak of the world as the forms of death (*mṛtyorūpāṇi*) and of the possibility of getting away from it: “This man (*puruṣa*) by being born and attaining a body, is joined with evils (*pāpman*). When he departs, on dying, he-leaves evils behind.” The normal death of old age means deliverance from life as dominated by death as a hostile power. Also in the ritual texts death in old age is regarded as good, and we have seen that there, too,

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<sup>24</sup> The same expression in ŚB X. 5. 1. 4, quoted above p. 87 f. Cf further e. g. TS I. 5. 9. 4: this world is *mṛtyusaṁyuta*, yoked with death.



the dissolution of the body may be regarded as a gate to the deliverance from death (above p. 93). In the Upaniṣads such ideas are prominent. The hermits of the forest stage are close to their normal death, and they meditate on it.

Examining the ideas of death in the Upaniṣads our attention is especially drawn to Kāṭha. The relations of Kāṭha to TB III. 11. 8 (see above p. 89 f) are somewhat doubtful.<sup>25</sup> The story is the same: Naciketas visits Death and obtains from him three boons. In the Brāhmaṇa the story is much shorter than in the Upaniṣad, where it is enlarged to a long discourse on typically Upaniṣadic ideas. This seems to indicate the secondary character of the Upaniṣad, a view which accords with the general opinion that the Upaniṣads represent a later period in Indian history than do the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>26</sup> But the matter is not quite so simple. In the Brāhmaṇa the two last gifts of Death are identical. Death explains the Nāciketa-fire. In the Upaniṣad they are different. The second gift is the knowledge of the Nāciketa-fire, the third one is the higher knowledge of *ātman*. That the Brāhmaṇa does not distinguish between the two last gifts does not give the impression of a primary text. On the other hand we can hardly believe that the text of the Upaniṣad is the source of that of the Brāhmaṇa. Probably neither is primary. The story is older than both of them and the Brāhmaṇa uses it in a ritualistic way, and does not do it very skilfully, not being able to distinguish between the last two gifts. The Upaniṣad uses the story for meditative purposes, treating it in such a masterful way that it has become a masterpiece in the literature of the world.

In the Brāhmaṇa version the deliverance from *punarmṛtyu* is the highest aim. In the Upaniṣad this term does not appear. We learn instead that death is nothing but life and that the whole life,

<sup>25</sup> DEUSSEN, AGP I. 1 p. 175 ff; OLTRAMARE, L'histoire des idées théosophiques I p. 128 ff; FADDEGON, De interpretatie der Kāṭhaka-Upaniṣad (1923) p. 9 ff; CHARPENTIER, Kāṭhaka Upaniṣad, IA 57 (1928) p. 206 ff.

<sup>26</sup> So e. g. RAWSON, The Kāṭha Upaniṣad (1934) p. 56 ff.

stamped by death, is the evil thing to be delivered from. Thus a comparison between the two versions well illustrates a difference in the attitudes towards death between ritualistic and meditative texts. Already in the beginning of Kaṭha its attitude is made clear. The father of Naciketas says angrily to his son: "To death (*mṛtyu*) I give you" (I. 4), but Naciketas answers: "What can Yama do with me to-day? . . . Like grain a mortal ripens, like grain he is born hither again" (I. 5—6). Thus to Naciketas death is not a final evil. It leads to a new birth, a new life on earth.

As his second boon Naciketas wishes to reach the heavenly world (*svarga loka*): "In the heavenly world is no fear (*bhaya*) whatsoever. Thou (Death) art not there. Nor does one fear from old age (*jarā*). Having crossed over both, hunger and thirst, gone beyond sorrow (*śoka*), one rejoices in the heavenly world" (I. 12). Death is an evil, but on the same line as fear, old age, hunger and thirst, sorrow, and all these things are the characteristics of life. Freedom from them is said to exist in heaven. When in I. 18 we hear of the bonds of death (*mṛtyu-pāśa*), these are in the same way connected with life, the preceding stanza speaking of birth and death (*janmamṛtyū*).

The third request of Naciketas concerns the destiny of man after death and so far it is not clearly distinguished from the second one. The difference consists mainly of the doubt of an existence after death, a doubt not expressed in the second question. To the Upaniṣad the answer, the teaching on the Self, *ātman*, which is not born, does not die, but is eternal and indestructible, is more important than the question. The evil from which deliverance shall be found is the same as before: death, understood as a part of life. Death is unwilling to answer, thus making the teaching of the Upaniṣad appear still more precious: "O Naciketas, do not question me about death (*maraṇa*)" (I. 25). But Naciketas says: "When one has come into the presence of undecaying immortals, what decaying mortal here below, that understands, that meditates upon the

pleasures of beauty and delight, would delight in a life over-long?" (I. 28). Death has tempted him with all sorts of earthly pleasures, wealth and long life, but for Naciketas all such things are stamped by death, and he does not care for them. The Upaniṣad then explains the way to that which is free from this stamp, to *ātman*. Of death it is said in II. 6 that the fools who have not the knowledge of *ātman* come again and again under its control (*punaḥ punar vaśam āpadyate me*). The term *punarmṛtyu* is not mentioned, but we are reminded of this evil, which we have seen playing such an important rôle in the Brāhmaṇa version. Certainly it is no accident that the term is not used here. It means a repeated death in another world, and in Kaṭha we do not hear anything of that evil. In the other world (*svarga loka*) there is no death, the text has declared in dealing with the second question. But the Upaniṣad is not very interested in the heavenly life, and does not dwell long on it. To die again and again means in this text a repeated death here on earth in a cycle of births and deaths. Kaṭha knows the doctrine of *saṃsāra* (I. 6, III. 7 f).

Finally, in the concluding stanzas of the third valli, it is said that he who has the right knowledge is delivered (*pra-mucyate*) from the mouth of death (*mṛtyumukha*) (III. 15). Thus death (*mṛtyu*) is in this text, as in the whole Veda, a fundamental evil from which deliverance is sought. But the sense of it is here another than in the ritual texts. In these a premature death, seizing man away from his social duties and his wealth, is the great evil. Death in old age is not feared, but in the next life the recurring death, *punarmṛtyu*, is a great threatening evil. In Kaṭha the ideas of death and deliverance from death are stamped by the doctrine of *saṃsāra*. What is now sought is deliverance from a cycle of births and deaths. To the meditating hermit of Kaṭha as well as to the priest of the village, death in old age is no evil. But the prospect of the new life that awaits man after that death, is in the ritual texts always good. In Kaṭha the new life is regarded as a new evil. Consequently,

deliverance from death means deliverance from life as characterized by birth and death.

In other texts, in which in the same way life and recurring life are regarded as something evil, it may be characterized by the expression *jarāmṛtyu*, old age and death. Just this expression has been met with above p. 84, as a name for the death in old age that is welcome. In Muṇḍ. I. 2. 7, however, we hear of the ignorant fools who "go again to *jarāmṛtyu*."

As in the Brāhmaṇas, the name of the opposite of death is *amṛta*, *amṛtatva*. Both words are frequent in the Upaniṣads. Ātman is free from death, and the Upaniṣads want to show how man may become so, too. As a rule the words are used in a very definite way. The texts take for granted that the listener knows what is meant by this freedom from death and give no other explication for the words than that given by their teaching as a whole. In Brh. I. 3. 28, quoted above p. 98, it is said that the expressions *mṛtyu* and *amṛta* do not need any elucidation. As another example of the typical use of *amṛta*, Brh. V. 14. 8 may be quoted: "Even so one who knows this, although he commits much evil (*pāpa*), consumes it all and becomes clean and pure, ageless (*ajara*) and free from death (*amṛta*)."

In Kauṣ. III. 2 we find the terms *amṛtatva* and *sarvam āyus* used in a way that reminds us of the Brāhmaṇa-texts, discussed above. Indra exhorts Pratardana Daivodāsi to worship him as *prāṇa* and says: "As long as *prāṇa* dwells in this body, so long is there life (*āyus*). For indeed, with *prāṇa* one obtains freedom from death (*amṛtatva*) in yonder world (*amuṣmiṇ loke*),<sup>27</sup> with intelligence (*prajñā*) true conception (*satya saṁkalpa*). He who

<sup>27</sup> Some MSS have *asmiṇ loke* "this world", and the translators usually adopt this text (DEUSSEN, HUME, TUXEN). This is also the text of JACOB's concordance (p. 803). Nevertheless, *amuṣmiṇ loke*, "that world", seems to be the correct reading. That is the text of ŚAMKARĀNANDA's commentary, and it is adopted in 108 Upaniṣads (ed. by PAṆŚIKAR) and in the text of the Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series. The parallelism of the

reverences me as immortal life (*āyus amṛta*) goes to full life (*sarvaṃ āyus*) in this world (*asmiṇ loke*), and reaches freedom from death (*amṛtatva*), indestructibility (*akṣiti*) in the heavenly world (*svarge loke*)". Here the full life, *sarvaṃ āyus*, belongs as a good thing to this world. A long life is not regarded as something evil, as in Kaṭha. The wise man obtains the full life in this world, as well as freedom from death, *amṛtatva*, in the heavenly world.

The freedom from death that is the goal towards which the Upaniṣads strive, is gained through meditation. When the ritual texts speak of knowledge and works as the way to salvation, the Upaniṣads speak of knowledge and meditation. The works belong to the social stage of life, the meditation is characteristic of the life in the forests. The delivering knowledge of which the meditative texts speak, is not of a discursive kind. Kaṭha II. 9 says: "Not by reasoning (*tarka*) is this thought (*mati*) to be attained", and Kaṭha II. 23 (= Muṇḍ. III. 2. 3): "This Ātman is not to be obtained by instruction, nor by intellect, nor by much learning. It is to be obtained only by the one whom it chooses. To such a one that Ātman reveals itself".

The deliverance that is won through meditation in this life, is not complete, however. As long as life goes on, there is no complete salvation.<sup>28</sup> In Brh. IV. 3. 8, quoted above p. 99, we have already heard how a man leaves evils behind when he dies. In a similar way, Muṇḍ. III. 2. 6 says that first in the Brahman-worlds, at the end of time (*parānta-kāle*) the wise ṛṣis are delivered (*pari-mucyanti*) beyond death (*parāmṛta*). And in Śvet. we find a rich stanza which deals with these matters and which is well suited to conclude this chapter on

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context supports this reading. For similar parallelisms in the Brāhmaṇas see above p. 90 f and 97.

<sup>28</sup> The doctrine of *jīvanmukti* is not much developed in the Upaniṣads. Cf DEUSSEN, AGP I. 2 p. 320 f; GARBE, Die Sāṃkhya-Philosophie, 2. Aufl. p. 242; SIRCAR, Hindu mysticism (1964) p. 810 ff; PRZYLUCKI, Die Erlösung nach dem Tode, Eranos Jahrbuch 1967 p. 110 ff.

deliverance from death (I. 11): "Having come to the knowledge of the god, there is a falling off of all fetters (*sarvapāśāpahāni*). With distresses (*kleśa*) destroyed there is a cessation of birth and death (*janmamṛtyuprahāni*). By meditating on him there is a third stage at the dissolution of the body (*dehābheda*), even universal lordship (*viśvaiśvarya*). Being absolute (*kevala*), his desire is satisfied (*āptakāma*)". It cannot be said that this stanza is representative for the Veda. The terminology of it is more in accordance with later Indian philosophy than with other Vedic texts (e. g. the use of the term *kleśa*). But we find in it the same ideas as have been discussed in texts, quoted above. The goal is a cessation of birth and death, i. e. deliverance from the cycle of existence. The normal death, here called the dissolution of the body, leads to universal lordship, i. e. full deliverance. After death the wise man becomes absolute, with all desires satisfied. He need not fear any rebirth or any redeath. This deliverance is won through meditation, which gives the right knowledge, i. e. the knowledge of the identity of man and god.

## THE CYCLE OF EXISTENCE

The investigation of the Vedic ideas of deliverance from death has brought us to the conception of *saṁsāra*. It is unnecessary to point out the immense importance of this conception for the religious thinking of India up to this day. In Hinduism through the ages, *saṁsāra* has been the Great Evil from which salvation, *mokṣa*, is sought.

*Saṁsāra* is often translated with "transmigration" or "metempsychosis". Such words, however, give only one aspect of the conception. It seems more adequate to render it with "the cycle of existence", an expression used e.g. sometimes by DASGUPTA in his History of Indian philosophy. In the conception of *saṁsāra* is gathered the Indian view of this whole world in its transitoriness.

The word *saṁsāra* is derived from *saṁ-sarati*, "to flow together".<sup>1</sup> The verb is not frequent, and is not of any great help for the interpretation of the nomen. This is not met with until it has become a technical term. We do not find it used in any more general sense. As a technical term it is most frequent in post-Vedic India, not so, however, in the Vedic literature. In the ritual texts it does not seem to appear at all, and in the principal Upaniṣads we find it only in the relatively young texts: once in Kāṭha, once in Śvet., four times in Maitri.<sup>2</sup> With *mokṣa* it is connected in the Śvet.-passage (VI.16). In Maitri

<sup>1</sup> PW VII col. 778. Cf. MASSON-OURSSEL, *Le Saṁsāra*, *Forum Philosophicum* 1 (1930—31) p. 324 f.

<sup>2</sup> JACOB, *A concordance* p. 947 f.

I. 4 a king laments over being fettered in *samsāra*, praying to be delivered (*uddhartum*).

Thus the Vedic material for a study of *samsāra* as something evil to be delivered from is not large. Having in mind, however, the immense importance attached to the conception in post-Vedic times, we must extend our study of it also to passages in which we do not meet the conception fully developed and in which the term is not directly used. This examination cannot be restricted to evil things. The elements of the *samsāra* doctrine that we find in the Veda, are usually not regarded as evil.

Much has been written by Western scholars on the conception of *samsāra*. As a rule, two main elements are distinguished: the idea of man being reborn after death to a new life on earth, and the idea of *karman*, i. e. the works of man as determining his destiny in this new life. In his interesting essay *Le Samsāra* (*Forum Philosophicum* 1, 1930—31, p. 323 ff), MASSON-OURSSEL maintains, however, that the foundation of the conception is a third idea: that of the flowing and unsteady condition of the world, “un flux universel”.<sup>3</sup> He finds this idea used only metaphorically in the Upaniṣads, fully developed, however, in Jainism and Buddhism. Consequently, his hints have no great importance for a study of Vedic ideas of a cycle of existence. For such a study we have to direct our attention to the ideas of *karman* and of rebirth, which in the Vedic texts are met with as well isolated as combined.

Discussing the origins of the *samsāra*-conception, some scholars have stressed mainly the doctrine of rebirth, which has been connected already by the Vedic thinkers with the ethically motivated idea of *karman*. Especially SEGERSTEDT<sup>4</sup> has pointed out the many analogies to the belief of rebirth

<sup>3</sup> Cf by the same author: *L'Inde antique* (1933) p. 161 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Själavandringslärans ursprung*, MO 4 (1910) p. 43 ff, 111 ff. Cf OLDENBERG, *Die Religion des Veda*, 2. Aufl. p. 58, 563 ff; LA VALLEE-POUSSIN, *Indo-européens* (1924) p. 289; BERTHOLET, *Seelenwanderung* (1904) p. 1 ff; BENDANN, *Death customs* p. 171 ff.



among peoples in various parts of the world. Comparative ethnology shows that a belief in a rebirth of man after death as animal, tree, etc. is very common, and this popular belief is regarded by S. as the foundation of the doctrine of the cycle of existence. Many scholars<sup>5</sup> believe that this popular belief was in the time of the Upaniṣads taken over by the Vedic Aryans from the un-Aryan aborigines of India. ZIMMER<sup>6</sup> proposes that the idea of transmigration originated in Mesopotamia and from there took its way to Greece as well as to India. In his thesis on the doctrine of transmigration HENSELER,<sup>7</sup> too, speaks of origins among the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, finding these origins not so much in beliefs concerning the destinies of the dead, however, as in observations of disappearing and returning phenomena in nature. He advances also another hypothesis, a very singular and unprovable one: that the idea of rebirth may come from a disappeared Atlantis.

Against the views of the doctrine of the cycle of existence as founded on popular ideas of the destinies of the deceased, other scholars declare that such ideas have nothing or very little to do with the doctrine of *samsāra*, which originates in the conviction that good and evil works must be rewarded and punished. Among scholars who in this way regard the idea of *karman* as the main origin of the doctrine of *samsāra*, DEUSSEN<sup>8</sup> and CHARPENTIER<sup>9</sup> may be mentioned. GARBE,<sup>10</sup> too, is on the

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<sup>5</sup> E. g. GOUGH, The philosophy of the Upanishads, 3rd ed. (1908) p. 24 f; G. W. BROWN, The sources of Indian philosophical ideas, Studies in honor of M. Bloomfield (1920) p. 85; CHATTERJI, The foundations of civilisation in India, Tijdschrift v. h. Kon. Bat. Gen. v. Kunst. en Wet. 68 (1929) p. 88; PRZYLUŚKI, Die Erlösung nach dem Tode, Eranos Jahrbuch 1937 p. 96; CORNELIUS, Indogermanische Religionsgeschichte (1942) p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> Tod und Wiedergeburt, Eranos Jahrbuch 1939 p. 273 f.

<sup>7</sup> L'âme et le dogme de la transmigration (1928) p. 41 ff.

<sup>8</sup> AGP I. 2 p. 284 f.

<sup>9</sup> Indien (1925) p. 516 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Die Sāṃkhya-Philosophie, 2. Aufl. p. 232 ff.

whole of this opinion, although he admits that popular beliefs — Aryan or un-Aryan — may have given the impetus ("Anstoss") to this thinking.

Concerning this question, as to whether or not popular ideas of rebirth are the foundation of the belief in a cycle of existence, one must say that we have no direct proofs of such beliefs in ancient India. Modern comparative ethnology can never definitely prove anything about ideas reigning in India three thousand years ago, and the excavations of the Indus valley, informing us of the culture of pre-Vedic India, have not told us anything of beliefs in rebirth. Pictures of creatures with human bodies and animal faces etc.<sup>11</sup> indicate ideas of close relations between men and animals, and might illustrate ideas of a rebirth of man in animals, but they cannot prove anything with regard to this.

As neither comparative ethnology nor excavations tell us anything of the origins of the Indian doctrine of a cycle of rebirths, we are restricted to the material of the Vedic texts themselves. BOYER,<sup>12</sup> especially, has examined the Vedic literature from this point of view. He strives to find a natural development from the early Vedic ideas concerning the life in heaven after death to the Upaniṣadic ideas of a rebirth on earth. The connecting link is, in the first place, the idea of a recurring death, found in the Brāhmanas. Thus there would be no need to seek non-Vedic origins of the idea of a cycle of existence. Yet BOYER does not regard the idea of rebirth as secondary to that of *karman* as does e. g. DEUSSEN. The opinion of BOYER has been accepted, on the whole, by WINDISCH.<sup>13</sup>

My task is now to examine what the Vedic texts say, on one hand about the rebirth of man to a new life on earth, on the

<sup>11</sup> Mohenjo-daro I p. 66 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Étude sur l'origine de la doctrine du *samsāra*, JA 9.18 (1901) p. 451 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Buddha's Geburt und die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung (1908) p. 57 ff. Cf STRAUSS, Indische Philosophie (1925) p. 41 f.

other hand about the works of man as determining his destiny after death, these two ideas forming together the foundation of the doctrine of the cycle of existence.

In the Samhitās we find no clear mention of a rebirth to this world.<sup>14</sup> The attempts to show that such ideas are involved in some RV-stanzas,<sup>15</sup> have not been convincing. Of special interest is RV X. 88. 15, because it is quoted in one of the classical texts of rebirth, Brh. VI. 2. 2. It speaks of two ways (*sruti*), but we find three genitives combined with them: of fathers (*pitṛ*), of gods (*deva*), and of mortal men (*martya*). There are most varying opinions as to how this shall be interpreted and translated.<sup>16</sup> At any rate we do not hear of any of these ways leading back to this world again. In all Vedic scriptures we find, however, the idea that man is reborn in his offspring. In RV this idea is met with in VI. 70. 3, where it is said that the pious man "is born in his offspring (*pra prajābhīr jāyate*)".<sup>17</sup>

The case is similar in the other Samhitās. Quite isolatedly the terminology of rebirth is met with in AV XII. 2. 52: "repeatedly he returns again (*muhur ā-vartate punaḥ*)". But elsewhere we find no explicit mention of a rebirth to this world. The expressions *devayāna* and *pitṛyāna*, the way of the gods and that of the fathers, which in the Upaniṣads are knit to the ideas of a cycle of rebirths, appear e. g. in AV XV. 12. 5 without

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<sup>14</sup> TUXEN, Forestillingen om Sjælen i Rigveda (1919) p. 23, connects this fact with the lack of a conception of a soul. The opinions of TUXEN are disputed by ARBMAN, Untersuchungen zur primitiven Seelenvorstellung II, MO 21 (1927) p. 100 ff.

<sup>15</sup> See e. g. BÖTTLINGK, Zwei vedische Rätsel, Ber. ü. d. Verh. d. Kön. Sächs. Ges. d. Wis. Phil. hist. Cl. 45 (1893) p. 88 ff; GELDNER in FISCHEL-GELDNER, Vedische Studien II (1892—97) p. 288 f, III (1901) p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> A detailed discussion in ARBMAN, Tod und Unsterblichkeit, ARW 26 (1928) p. 187 ff. Cf also OLDENBERG, Rgveda, Textkritische und exegetische Noten II (1912) p. 295, and OLTRAMARE, L'histoire des idées théosophiques I p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> Cf RV V. 4. 10 speaking of *amṛtaiva* through the offspring, quoted above p. 82 f.

any connections with ideas of rebirth to a new life on earth.<sup>18</sup> VS XXXV. 22 speaks of the rebirth to another world: "From this (man) thou art born (O Agni). Let him be born again from thee. That man for the heavenly world (*svarga loka*)."<sup>19</sup>

Ideas of the works of man as determining his destiny after death, on the other hand, are prominent in the *Saṃhitās*. I quote two stanzas from the famous funeral hymn RV X. 14:<sup>20</sup>

7. Go forth, go forth upon those ancient pathways  
by which our former fathers have departed.  
Thou shalt behold god Varuṇa, and Yama,  
both kings, in funeral offerings rejoicing.
8. Unite thou with the Fathers and with Yama,  
with *iṣṭāpūrta* in the highest heaven.  
Leaving behind all blemish homeward hie thee  
and all-resplendent join thee with a body.

In the Indian tradition as well as by modern scholars<sup>21</sup> the word *iṣṭāpūrta*<sup>22</sup> is interpreted as sacrificial merits (*iṣṭa*) and good works (*pūrta*). These things meet man in his new life after death. It seems quite justifiable, as BLOOMFIELD<sup>23</sup> and others claim, to regard the idea of *iṣṭāpūrta* as a preparation of the doctrine of *karman*.

For the studies of the Vedic ideas of *karman* and of rebirth, the *Brāhmaṇas* are of greater interest than the *Saṃhitās*. The

<sup>18</sup> Likewise in SB I. 9. 3. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Cf below p. 113.

<sup>20</sup> Translation after GRISWOLD, *The religion of the R̥gveda* (1923) p. 308 f.

<sup>21</sup> PW I col. 382; WINDISCH, *Vedisches, Festgruss an O. v. Böhtlingk* (1888) p. 115 ff.

<sup>22</sup> On the form see WACKERNAGEL, *Altindische Grammatik* II. 1 (1905) p. 160.

<sup>23</sup> *The religion of the Veda* (1908) p. 194 f. Cf MCKENZIE, *Hindu ethics* (1922) p. 15; GRISWOLD op. cit. p. 318.

ideas of these things are on the whole the same in these two kinds of texts, but in the Brāhmaṇas they are expounded in greater detail.

We do not hear in the Brāhmaṇas of a rebirth in the sense that this idea has in the doctrine of *saṃsāra*. When speaking of rebirth the texts mean either the rebirth to the new life obtained by man in his son in this world, or the rebirth into another world. There is also some mention of the rebirth that makes a man fit to sacrifice.

In the preceding chapter (p. 90) I have referred to AB VII. 13, where a Brahman is said to be delivered from death by begetting a son. In that text we also find the expressions *punar bhavati*, to come to a new existence, and *punar jāyate*, to be born again: "The husband enters the wife. Having become a germ he (enters) the mother. Getting a new existence (*punar navo bhūtvā*) in her, he is born (*jāyate*) in the tenth month. A wife (*jāyā*) has her name of wife, since in her he is born again (*jāyate punah*)."

Likewise ŚB II. 2. 4. 7—8, commenting upon the Agnihotra-ritual, speaks of man as being reborn in his offspring: "Who-soever knowing this, offers the Agnihotra, reproduces himself by offspring (*prajātim prajāyate*) even as Prajāpati reproduced himself and saves (*trāyate*) himself from the fire, death (*agni mṛtyu*), when he is about to devour him. And when he dies, and when they place him on the fire, then he is born (*adhi-jāyate*) out of the fire, and the fire consumes only his body. Even as he is born from his father and mother, so he is born from the fire. But he who offers not the Agnihotra, does not come into life (*saṃ-bhavati*) at all." Agni is here called death as being the fire that consumes the body. The question as to whether the body is the prey of death or not, has been dealt with above p. 92 ff. The new life that awaits the sacrificer is the same life that he himself has inherited from his own parents and which he now transmits to his offspring.

While this text says that Agni as the funeral fire gives man

a new life in this world, i. e. in his offspring, ŚB II. 3. 3. 1—5 declares that the same Agni reproduces man in another world: "Now when Prajāpati, in creating living beings, created Agni, the latter, as soon as born, sought to burn everything here. And so everybody tried to get out of his way. The creatures then existing sought to crush him. Being unable to endure this, he went to man (*puruṣa*). He said: 'I cannot endure this. Come, let me enter into thee! Having reproduced me (*janayitvā*), maintain me. And as thou wilt reproduce and maintain me in this world, even so will I reproduce and maintain thee in yonder world (*amuṣmīṇ loke*)!' He (man) replied: 'So be it.' And having reproduced him, he maintained him. Now when he establishes the two fires, he reproduces that (Agni). And having reproduced him, he maintains him. And as he reproduces and maintains him in this world, even so does he (Agni) reproduce and maintain him in yonder world. One must not, therefore, remove it (the sacrificial fire) prematurely, for too soon it languishes for him. And as it languishes for him too soon in this world, even so does it languish for him too soon in yonder world. One must not, therefore, remove it prematurely. And when he dies, and they place him on the fire, then he is reproduced (*adhi-jāyate*) from out of the fire. And he (Agni) who heretofore was his son, now becomes his father." Here the funeral fire is connected with the sacrificial fire. When man maintains the sacrificial fire, the funeral fire will beget him into yonder world.

The ideas of the fate that will meet man in "yonder world" are not very fixed. Sometimes we find ideas of how man dissolves into various nature phenomena. So in ŚB X. 3. 3. 8: "And when he who knows this passes away from this world, he passes into the fire by his speech, into the sun by his eye, into the moon by his mind, into the quarters by his ear, and into the wind by his breath; and being composed thereof, he becomes whichever of these deities he chooses, and is at rest." In another ŚB-text (X. 2. 6. 8) we find conceptions of time as the

goals of man. There it is said that according to the age in which one dies, one is consigned to days and nights, the half-months, the months, the seasons, the year, respectively. This passage ends by saying that he alone who lives a hundred years or more attains freedom from death (*amṛta*).

In ŚB XI. 2. 1. 1 the birth in the funeral fire is called the third birth of man: "Man is born (*jāyate*) thrice, namely in this way: first he is born from his mother and father, and when he to whom the sacrifice inclines performs offering he is born a second time. And when he dies, and they place him on the fire, and when he thereupon comes into existence (*sam-bhavati*) again, he is born a third time. Wherefore they say that man is born thrice." Here we find the same verb as in ŚB II. 2. 4. 8, quoted above: *sam-bhavati*. The life to which man is born through his third birth is not described. We may think of the new existence that a man obtains in his offspring as well as of the life in a heavenly world.

ŚB I. 5. 3. 14 is sometimes quoted as the Brāhmaṇa-passage most closely approaching the doctrine of a cycle of rebirths. "The spring comes into life again out of the winter, for out of the one the other is born again (*punar-bhavati*). Therefore he who knows this is indeed born again in this world (*asmiṁ loke*)." This text speaks expressively of a new existence in this world. According to BOYER<sup>24</sup> this means that man is born back to a life in this world, not from the death ending this life, but from the recurring death in the life of the other world. This is to find too much in the text, however. Compared with other Brāhmaṇa-texts, it does not say more than these, namely that man is reborn in his son. The same verb as we found used in AB VII. 13 for this fact: *punar-bhavati*, is used here.

Finally should be mentioned a text from ŚB, which in EGGELING's translation<sup>25</sup> seems to deal with ideas of rebirth in

<sup>24</sup> BOYER op. cit. p. 495 f. Likewise OLTRAMARE op. cit. p. 105; OLDENBERG, Die Lehre der Upanishaden p. 29.

<sup>25</sup> SBE 26 p. 11.

a remarkable way. In ŚB III.1.2.21 we read: "Let him not eat (the flesh) of either the cow or the ox; for the cow and the ox doubtless support everything here on earth . . . Hence were one to eat (the flesh) of an ox or a cow, there would be, as it were, an eating of everything, or, as it were, a going to the end (or, to destruction) (*antagatī*). Such a one indeed would be likely to be born (again) (*abhi-jañitoḥ*) as a strange being (*adbhutam*), (as one of whom there is) evil report, such as 'he has expelled an embryo from a woman', 'he has committed a sin (*pāpa*)'; let him therefore not eat (the flesh) of the cow and the ox. Nevertheless Yājñavalkya said: 'I, for one, eat it, provided that it is tender.' The central part of this text running: *tam hādbhutamabhijanitorjāyāyai garbham nirabadhīditi pāpamakad-iti pāpī kīrtiḥ*, seems to be better translated in the following way:<sup>26</sup> "of such a one there would be evil report so that it is said: 'a monster, one who has destroyed an embryo in his wife so that it is not born, one who has committed evil'." *Adbhutam* is an exclamation of horror, and *abhijanitoḥ* is connected with the words following it instead of with *adbhutam*. In this way the text speaks of the birth of a child to the wife, not of any other kind of rebirth. The main interest of it is to forbid flesh-eating. This idea is not fixed yet, and we see that the great authority Yājñavalkya does not accept it. But the position of Yājñavalkya on this matter did not prevail, and so ŚB does not take his part. It stresses the evil consequences of flesh-eating. A man eating flesh gets an evil report just like the embryo-slayer, the worst of sinners.

In Saṁhitās as well as in Brāhmaṇas we have found ideas of rebirth in one's offspring and of rebirth into a heavenly world. Together with the conception of a recurring death, *punarmṛtyu*, dealt with in the preceding chapter, these ideas may have prepared the doctrine of a rebirth to a new life on

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<sup>26</sup> In this translation I have been helped by Professor H. SMITH. Cf also DELBRÜCK, *Die altindische Wortfolge* (1878) p. 25 f.



earth that forms a part of the doctrine of *samsāra*. An individualistic trend of thought may have made it less natural to speak of rebirth in one's offspring. The tendency to diminish the importance of the gods may have diminished the interest in a heavenly life. The transition to the idea of man being reborn to a new life on earth, irrespective of the son, is not made in the Brāhmaṇas, however. There is no straight line of development from the ideas of rebirth appearing in the ritual texts to those of the Upaniṣads. In the Upaniṣads, ideas of rebirth are met with, that we do not find in the ritual texts, at the same time as the ideas of rebirth that have now been reviewed continue to appear.

It should also be observed that in the ritual texts the rebirth, whatever sense it may have, never appears as anything evil. Death and redeath are the evils from which the sacrificer is delivered, while birth and rebirth are good things. This is clearly stated e. g. in ŚB XI. 2. 2. 5: "When he offers, he thereby consecrates him after death, and causes him to be born (*janayati*) from out of it, and he is delivered from (*ati-mucyate*) that death (*mṛtyu*)."

The second main element of the *samsāra*-conception is the idea that the works of man determine his destiny after death. I need not dwell on the rôle of this idea in the Brāhmaṇas. In the quotations in this and the preceding chapters we have heard often enough, how knowledge and sacrificial works determine the future destiny of man. In the meditative Vedic texts knowledge (*vidyā* or *jñāna*)<sup>27</sup> is contrasted to work (*karman*). Knowledge alone delivers from evil. In the ritualistic texts the importance of *karman* is stressed, but at its side knowledge

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<sup>27</sup> The word *jñāna* does not seem to appear in the Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, in which *vidyā* is the term for the sacred knowledge. In the Upaniṣads *jñāna* is sometimes used, but also there *vidyā* is the term most frequently used. Later, however, *jñāna-mārga* has become the accepted term for the way to salvation through knowledge, cf e. g. DASGUPTA, A history of Indian philosophy I p. 436 f.

appears as equally important.<sup>28</sup> Even in some Samhitā-hymns knowledge is met with as a means to salvation. In RV I. 164. 23 we read: "They who know this have reached freedom from death (*ya it tad vidus te amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ*)". In ŚB the expression "he who knows this (*ya evam veda*)" is met with over and over again. In ŚB X. 4. 3. 9—10, which have been quoted above p. 92 f and from which I repeat a few lines, knowledge and work are mentioned together in a typical way: "Now when they said 'either through knowledge (*vidyā*) or through holy work (*karman*)' it is this Agni-altar that is the knowledge, and this Agni-altar is the holy work. And they who so know this or they who do this holy work, come to life again when they have died, and coming to life, they come to a life free from death."

Not often do the texts enter on any detailed descriptions of the way in which man is rewarded or punished after death according to his works. Such a text is ŚB XI. 6. 1. 1 ff,<sup>29</sup> speaking of how Bhṛgu, the son of Varuṇa, visits the land of the dead. He sees men being punished in ways that vary, according to their deeds in this world. All kinds of punishment have their equivalents in the sacrificial rites, by which consequently man can be delivered from the menacing terrors.

In the Brāhmaṇas *karman* is a central term for meritorious sacrificial work, which is not the case in the Samhitās. The word that we observed in the Samhitās in this connection, *iṣṭāpūrta*, is not very frequent in the Brāhmaṇas. We find it e. g. in a royal oath in AB VIII. 15 where the king swears on his *iṣṭāpūrta* as well as on his *sukṛta*, his good deeds. In AB VII. 21, too, *iṣṭāpūrta* is the name for the merits of a king. A special rite shall prevent the decay of this treasure of merits.

<sup>28</sup> Sometimes, but not very often, ŚB goes very far in despising sacrificial works. See e. g. ŚB XI. 2. 6. 13, where the self-offerer (*ātmayājīn*) is said to be better than the god-offerer (*devayājīn*).

<sup>29</sup> Cf WEBER, Eine Legende des Çatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, ZDMG 9 (1855) p. 237 ff.

In ŚB XIII. 1. 5. 6 *iṣṭāpūrta* is said to belong to the priest, who gives it to the sacrificer.

In the Upaniṣads we come closer to the full *saṃsāra*-conception. There the importance of the doctrine of *karman* is solemnly stressed. There we hear of rebirth in a way that is not met with in the ritual texts.

The word *iṣṭāpūrta* appears only a few times in the Upaniṣads. In Chānd. V. 10. 3 it is used when the text wants to characterize the piety of the villager. He who lives in the village (*grāma*) with a belief in *iṣṭāpūrte* is contrasted with him who lives in the forest (*araṇya*) with a belief in faith (*śraddhā*) (V. 10. 1). The same contrast appears in Muṇḍ. I. 2. 10—11: "Thinking sacrifice and merits (*iṣṭāpūrta*) to be the best thing" the foolish ones are fettered in the cycle of existence, while those who in the forest (*araṇya*) practise austerity and faith (*tapasśraddhe*), reach deliverance from that evil. Exactly the same contrast is met with in Praśna I. 9—10, too: "Those who worship in the belief that sacrifice and merits (*iṣṭāpūrte*) are their work (*kṛta*)" return to this world again (*punar ā-vartante*) from the lunar world, while those who practise austerity, faith, chastity and knowledge, reach the final goal and do not return.

We see that in the Upaniṣads *iṣṭāpūrta* characterizes the sacrificial life with its restrictions as to the possibility of gaining salvation. Those who adhere to the belief in such merits are fettered in a cycle of existence. They go the *pitr-yāna*, the way of fathers (Praśna I. 9), which, as we shall see below, leads to a temporary existence in other worlds and then back again to this world. In the Upaniṣads the word *karman* is used much more frequently than *iṣṭāpūrta*. Man performs works especially with his hands, and the connection between *karman* and the hands is stressed e. g. in Brh. III. 2. 8. In the ritual texts we have found *karman* especially used of sacrificial work. The same connection appears in the Upaniṣads. In Muṇḍ. I. 2 sacrificial performances are described, and when *karman* is

used in st. 1 and 7, it signifies such work. In st. 9 the sacrificers are called *karmins*, i. e. doers of *karman*. In st. 10 they are said to believe in *iṣṭāpūrta*. While in the ritual texts *karman* and *vidyā* are as a rule intimately connected as meritorious with regard to salvation, they are in the Upaniṣads often opposed to one another, however. In the Muṇḍ.-text, referred to, the doers of *karman* are despised. They are fools (7), and they go around like blind men led by another blind man (8).

Brh. I. 5. 16 gives an illustration of the contrast between *karman* and *vidyā*:<sup>30</sup> "This world of man is to be obtained by a son only, by no other work (*karman*); the world of the fathers by work (*karman*); the world of the gods by knowledge (*vidyā*). The world of the gods is the best of the worlds. Therefore they praise knowledge (*vidyā*)." *Karman* is here mentioned twice, and it is generally interpreted as having somewhat different meanings in the two connections. When it is said that the world of the fathers is obtained by *karman*, ŚAṂKARA comments "Agnihotra etc.", and, in accordance with this, HUME<sup>31</sup> translates "sacrifice". It does not seem improbable, however, that *karman* includes here such social duties as begetting a son as well as sacrificial duties. Social and ritual duties are intimately involved in one another. Signifying such duties *karman* is contrasted to knowledge (*vidyā*). As intended for the stage when social life is abandoned, the Upaniṣad praises *vidyā* and despises *karman*, which is regarded more or less as something evil.

In spite of its being despised in this way, *karman* maintains in the Upaniṣads a central position as a point of departure for the meditation. As an example I quote the well-known Brh.-passage III. 2. 13, which speaks of *karman* as a secret doctrine:

<sup>30</sup> On *karman* as something hindering man from gaining salvation see further below p. 166 ff.

<sup>31</sup> The thirteen principal Upanishads p. 89. Similarly DEUSSEN, Sechzig Upanishad's p. 408. Tuxen, De ældste Upanishader I p. 19, translates *karman* in both connections with the neutral "work (Gerning)", however.

“Yājñavalkya”, said he (Ārthabhāga), ‘when the voice of a dead man goes into fire, his breath (*prāṇa*) into wind, his eye into the sun, his mind (*manas*) into the moon, his ear into the quarters, his body (*śarīra*) into the earth, his self (*ātman*) into space (*ākāśa*), the hairs of his body into the plants, the hairs of his head into trees, and his blood and semen are placed in water, what then becomes of this man (*puruṣa*)?’ ‘Ārthabhāga, my dear, take my hand. We two only will know of this. This is not for us (to speak of) in public.’ The two went away and deliberated. What they said was work (*karman*). What they praised was *karman*. One becomes good (*puṇya*) by good work (*karman*), evil (*pāpa*) by evil (work).” As to the rôle of *karman* the passage is not very elucidating.<sup>32</sup> It is nevertheless interesting especially as a symptom of the importance that is attached to this conception in the Upaniṣads. For the present study, it should be noted that *karman* is here no evil thing. The two men praised (*pra-śaṁsatuḥ*) *karman*. In itself it is neutral, it may be either good or evil.

In the development in which *karman* comes to be the law ruling all human life,<sup>33</sup> the most important factor is the persuasion that with necessity a deed bears its fruit. This is briefly said in the passage just quoted, and it is often repeated. Another example is Brh. IV. 4. 5: “According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become. The doer of good (*sādhukārin*) becomes good. The doer of evil (*pāpakārin*) becomes evil. One becomes good (*puṇya*) by good work (*karman*), bad (*pāpa*) by bad (work).”<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Cf TUXEN, Buddha p. 219.

<sup>33</sup> Thus it comes near to *rta*, which conception is to be dealt with in the next chapter. Cf DAHLMANN, Der Idealismus der indischen Religionsphilosophie (1901) p. 114 f; OLDENBERG, Zur Religion und Mythologie des Veda, NGG Phil. hist. Kl. 1915 p. 180; DASGUPTA op. cit. p. 26; RADHAKRISHNAN, Indian philosophy I p. 109; HEIMANN, Studien zur Eigenart indischen Denkens p. 32 ff.

<sup>34</sup> The close connection between the works and their consequences, apparent in the whole Veda, is reflected especially in the relation be-

The inevitable results of the works of man are not restricted to this life. In the ritual texts we have met the conviction that the works of man bear their fruits in the next life, and the same conviction appears in the Upaniṣads. So Muṇḍ. I. 2. 9—10 says that the *karmins* get their reward "on the top of heaven won by good works (*sukṛta*)".<sup>35</sup>

With these ideas of *karman* the ideas of rebirth are connected. In the Upaniṣads we find as in the ritual texts ideas of a new life in a heavenly world as well as ideas of the rebirth of man in his son. Of the transition to a heavenly life speaks the well-known text Brh. IV. 4. 3—4:<sup>36</sup> "Now as a caterpillar, when it has come to the end of a blade of grass, in taking the next step draws itself (*ātman*) together towards it, just so this Self (*ātman*) in taking the next step strikes down this body, dispels its false knowledge (*avidyā*) and draws itself together. As a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, reduces it to another newer and more beautiful form, just so this Self striking down this body and dispelling its false knowledge, makes for itself another newer and more beautiful form like that either of the fathers, or of the Gandharvas, or of the gods, or of Prajāpati, or of Brahman, or of other beings."

We find also texts speaking of how the life of a man is continued in his son. In Kauṣ. II. 15 (cf Brh. I. 5. 17) it is described how a man shall transmit his life to his son. The

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tween sin and disease. Cf LA VALLÉE-POUSSIN, Des impuretés et des purifications dans l'Inde antique (1891) p. 42, and below p. 140 ff.

<sup>35</sup> *Nākasya prṣṭhe te sukṛte 'nubhūtā*. The regular absoluteive would be *anubhūya*, and ŚAMKARA glosses *anubhūtā* in that way. HERTEL, Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1924) p. 40, asserts that the form should be *anubhūte*, making a loc. abs. together with *sukṛte*. My translation is that of HUME op. cit. p. 369.

<sup>36</sup> Although the passage appears close to a verse speaking of a return to this world, it does not by itself speak of such a rebirth. Cf SCHRADER, Zum Ursprung der Lehre vom Samsāra, ZDMG 64 (1910) p. 363 ff. — It may be noted that the text regards the new existence as something good, describing the transition to it in beautiful metaphors.

idea of the continuance of life in this way is combined with the idea of a life in heaven, when at the end of the rite the son says to his father: "Heavenly worlds and desires do you obtain (*svargān lokān kāmān āpnuhi*)."<sup>27</sup> Also in Ait. IV. 3—4 we find ideas of these two rebirths combined: "In that he nourishes the child from birth onward, he thus nourishes his own self, for the continuation of these worlds; for thus are these worlds continued. This is one's second birth. This self of one is put in one's place for good deeds (*puṇya karman*). Then this other self of one, having done his work, having reached his age, deceases. So, deceasing hence, he is born again (*punar-jāyate*). This is one's third birth.»

Of greater interest are the texts in which we hear of rebirth in the way in which this idea has become a part of the doctrine of *samsāra*. This idea of a rebirth to this world is combined with the ideas of the other kinds of rebirth and with those of *karman*. No definite synthesis is reached. Various ideas appear side by side.<sup>27</sup>

In Brh. IV. 4. 6 a verse is quoted: "Obtaining the end of his work (*karman*), whatever he does here, he comes again from that world to this *karman*-world." In Kaṭha V. 7 it is shortly said that man is born in a new womb "according to his work (*karman*) and his knowledge (*śruta*)". In Muṇḍ. I. 2. 10 we hear of the *karmīns* that having enjoyed the fruits of their good works on the top of heaven "they re-enter this world or a lower".

More elaborate descriptions of a cycle of existence, in which after death man is reborn to a new life on earth, appear in Brh. VI. 2, with the parallel Chānd. V. 3—10. Here we find two sets of ideas, the doctrine of the five fires (*pañcāgnividyā*) and that of the two ways. They are arranged into a fixed composition with an introduction that aims at both of them, although by themselves they are very different.

<sup>27</sup> The attempts of DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upanishad's* p. 139 f, AGP I. 2 p. 295 ff, to systematize them in a scheme of historical evolution are not convincing. Cf WINDISCH *op. cit.* p. 68 f.

Śvetaketu comes to the prince (*rājanya*) Pravāhaṇa Jaivali asking for instruction. The latter puts questions to him (Brh. VI. 2. 1 ff): "Do you know how people here, on deceasing, separate in different directions? Do you know how they come back again to this world? Do you know why yonder world is not filled up with the many who continually thus go thence? Do you know in which oblation that is offered the water becomes the voice of a person, rises up and speaks? Do you know the access of the path, leading to the gods (*devayāna*), or of the one leading to the fathers (*pitryāna*)?, by doing what, people go to the path of the gods or of the fathers?" On the two paths Pravāhaṇa quotes RV X. 88. 15. Śvetaketu, however, cannot answer a single question and runs home to his father, reproaching him for not having given him proper instruction. The father goes to the wise prince, who declares that no Brahman has yet attained to the knowledge that he has. Then he goes on:

"Yonder world (*asau loka*) is a fire, Gautama. The sun is its fuel, the light-rays the smoke, the day the flame, the quarters of heaven the coals, the intermediate quarters the sparks. In this fire the gods offer faith (*śraddhā*). From this oblation King Soma arises.

"The rain-cloud (*parjanya*) is a fire, Gautama. The year is its fuel, the thunder-clouds the smoke, the lightning the flame, the thunder-bolts the coals, the hail-stones the sparks. In this fire the gods offer King Soma. From this oblation rain (*vr̥ṣṭi*) arises.

"This world (*ayam loka*) is a fire, Gautama. The earth is its fuel, fire the smoke, night the flame, the moon the coals, the stars the sparks. In this fire the gods offer rain. From this oblation food (*anna*) arises.

"Man (*puruṣa*) is a fire, Gautama. The open mouth is its fuel, breath (*prāṇa*) the smoke, speech (*vāc*) the flame, the eye the coals, the ear the sparks. In this fire the gods offer food. From this oblation semen (*retas*) arises.



"Woman is a fire, Gautama. The sexual organ (*upastha*) is its fuel, the hairs the smoke, the vulva the flame, when one inserts the coal, the feelings of pleasure the sparks. In this fire the gods offer semen. From this oblation man (*puruṣa*) arises. He lives as long as he lives.

"Then when he dies they carry him to the fire. His fire is the fire, fuel the fuel, smoke the smoke, flame the flame, coals the coals, sparks the sparks. In this fire the gods offer man (*puruṣa*). From this oblation man (*puruṣa*) arises, having the colour of light."

This doctrine of the five fires describes the way of man from the heavenly world to human existence. Arriving at human existence, the two parallel texts conclude their relations of the doctrine in various ways. As we have seen, Brh. says, that man lives as long as he lives, and continues by speaking of the normal cremation fire. It ends by saying that a man arises, having the colour of light (*puruṣa bhāsvavaravarna*). The meaning of the last words is not clear. SENART, Brhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad (1934) p. 108, writes: "C'est à dire, expliquent les commentateurs, l'homme purifié et, en quelque sorte, transfiguré par les cérémonies du sacrifice". In a not very convincing manner ARBMAN<sup>38</sup> tries to vindicate that this *puruṣa* is the soul of man. It seems doubtful whether it is worth while to seek any deeper meaning in these words. It may be enough to think of the bright fire itself. The parallel text in Chānd. has nothing to say of this *puruṣa*. Nor does it use the word *puruṣa* when speaking of the product of the womanly fire. According to Chānd. V. 8 the embryo (*garbha*) arises from that fire. And then the text continues (9): "Thus in the fifth oblation the waters come to have human voices. This embryo, covered with membrane, after having lain within for ten or nine<sup>39</sup> months, or

<sup>38</sup> Untersuchungen zur primitiven Seelenvorstellung II, MO 21 p. 142 ff.

<sup>39</sup> The words "or nine (*nava vā*)" are excluded in the editions of BÖTTLINGK (p. 53) and of SENART (p. 67), and in the translations of DEUSSEN (p.142) and of HUME (p. 202), for no reason.

for however long it is, then he is born. When born he lives for as long as is his life (*āyus*). When deceased they carry him hence to the appointed place for the fire from whence indeed he came, from whence he arose." There the Chānd.-text of the five fires ends, not speaking at all of any result or product of the cremation fire. It only says that as man has come from fire, so he goes to fire.

The doctrine of the five fires describes thus no cycle of existence. Probably getting the idea from the funeral fire it develops how man has come into life through a series of similar fires, in which the elements of the funeral fire have their various correspondences. Of *karman* there is no mention in this doctrine.

The doctrine of the two ways, however, which both Brh. and Chānd. relate immediately after the doctrine of the five fires, describes a cycle of existence. It begins where the other doctrine ends: in the funeral fire.

(Brh. VI. 2. 15—16) "Those who know this and those who in the forest worship faith (*śraddhā*) as reality (*satya*) pass into the flame, from the flame into the day, from the day into the half month of the waxing moon, from the half month of the waxing moon into the six months during which the sun moves northward, from the months into the world of the gods (*deva-loka*), from the world of the gods into the sun, from the sun into the lightning region. A man (*puruṣa*) consisting of mind (*mānasa*) goes to those regions of lightning and conducts them to the Brahman-worlds. In those Brahman-worlds they dwell for long extents. Of these there is no return (*punarāvṛtti*).

"But they who by sacrificial offering, charity, and austerity (*tapas*) conquer the worlds,<sup>40</sup> pass into the smoke, from the smoke into the night, from the night into the half month of the waning moon, from the half month of the waning moon

<sup>40</sup> The parallel text in Chānd. V. 10.3 says here (cf above p. 118): "But those who in the village (*grāma*) reverence with a belief in sacrificial merits and good works (*iṣṭāpūrte*) as their gift (*datta*) ..."

into the six months during which the sun moves southward, from the months into the world of the fathers (*pitṛloka*), from the world of the fathers into the moon. Having reached the moon they become food (*anna*). There the gods — as they say to King Soma ‘Increase, Decrease’ — even so feed upon them there. When that passes away for them, they pass forth into this space (*ākāśa*), from space into air (*vāyu*), from air into rain (*vṛṣṭi*), from rain into the earth. Having reached the earth they become food. Again they are offered in the fire of man. Thence they are born in the fire of woman.<sup>41</sup> Rising up into the worlds, they cycle round again (*anupari-vartante*) thus. But those who do not know these two ways, become crawling and flying insects and whatever there is here that bites.”

The end of the parallel text in Chānd. is extended in an interesting way (V. 10. 7—8): “Accordingly, those who are of pleasant conduct here, the prospect is that they will enter a pleasant womb, either the womb of a Brahman, or the womb of a Kṣatriya, or the womb of a Vaiśya. But those who are of a stinking conduct here, the prospect is that they will enter a stinking womb, either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine, or the womb of an outcast (*caṇḍāla*). But on neither of these ways are the small, continually returning creatures, (those of whom it is said) ‘Be born, and die’. Theirs is a third state.”

In this doctrine of the two ways we hear of the way of man from this world to heaven as well as of his way from heaven back to this world again. The best thing is to ascend to the Brahman-worlds without any prospects of returning to earthly life. That is the way of the forest hermits who have the right knowledge. Those who have not abandoned ritual and social

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<sup>41</sup> In the Mādhyandina text the two fires, man and woman, are not mentioned (SB XIV. 9. 1. 19). This is evidently an addition in the Kāṇva text in order to combine the doctrine of the two ways with that of the five fires. — All the various readings of the two Brh.-texts and the Chānd.-text are not discussed here. Cf the table in DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upanishad's* p. 138.

duties go to the world of the fathers and to the moon and back again to earth. They "cycle round". Even though this cycle is not directly said to be an evil to be delivered from, the ascent to the Brahman-worlds without the prospect of returning is said to be a better thing than the rebirth to earthly life. Still worse it is, however, to enter none of these two ways. As to the conception of *karman*, we do not find this word mentioned. But the sacrificial and social merits, which cause the return, are such things as in texts discussed above have been called *iṣṭāpūrta* or *karman*. Especially the Chānd.-text deals with various destinies according to various merits, and it also uses the word *iṣṭāpūrta*.

In another important text on these matters, Kauṣ. I. 2,<sup>42</sup> we find the word *karman*. *Karman* together with knowledge, *vidyā*, determines the kind of rebirth: "Those who depart from this world they all go to the moon." The moon puts questions. "Whoever answers him, him he lets go further. But whoever answers him not, him, having become rain, he rains down here. Either as a worm, or as a moth, or as a fish, or as a bird, or as a lion, or as a wild boar, or as a snake, or as a tiger, or as a man (*puruṣa*) or as some other in this or that condition, he is born again (*pratyājāyate*) according to his work (*karman*), according to his knowledge (*vidyā*)."

The central theme of the Upaniṣads is the description of the experience of a world without individuality, without death. Contrasted to that world of Brahman-Ātman, the visible world loses its value. The cycle of rebirths according to *karman*, that in some texts is said to be the form of human existence in this world, is an evil when contrasted to Brahman-Ātman.

The Upaniṣads are so absorbed in expounding their positive message, however, that they do not speak much of its contrast.

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<sup>42</sup> Cf WINDISCH, Zu Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa-Upaniṣad I. 2, Ber. u. d. Verh. d. Kön. Sächs. Ges. d. Wis. Phil. hist. Kl. 59 (1907) p. 111 ff, with interesting texts from Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa on the same subject, and SÆGERSTEDT op. cit. p. 55 ff.

In Brh. III. 4—5 Yājñavalkya explains the doctrine of Ātman. Ātman is in all things. With the words: "Anything else is *ārta*", both passages end. *Ārta* is the participle of *ā-rcchati* (cf above p. 64 f), inflict, and means afflicted, suffering. HUME (p. 112 f) translates "wretched". Perhaps we might simply say "evil". The same expression for the contrast of the blissful Highest Unity returns in Brh. III. 7. 23.

The main difference between the world of Ātman-Brahman and the visible world lies in the individualities and differences of this world. Brh. IV. 4. 19 says: "By mind (*manas*) alone is this to be perceived. There is no difference (*nānā*) here at all. From death to death<sup>43</sup> reaches he who sees as it were a difference here." Kāṭha IV. 10—11 says the same thing a little more fully: "What is here that is there, what is there that is here. From death he reaches death who sees as it were a difference here. By mind this is to be obtained: there is no difference here at all. From death to death goes he who sees as it were a difference here." The individuality is characterized by name and form, and so Muṇḍ. III. 2. 8 speaks of deliverance from these evils: "As the flowing rivers disappear in the ocean, quitting name and form (*nāmarūpe*, dual.), so the knower, delivered (*vi-mukta*) from name and form (*nāmarūpa*, sing.) goes to the heavenly *puruṣa*, higher than the high."

In an interesting passage Śvet. I. 6 speaks of this world as a wheel in which the soul is fettered until it reaches salvation through knowledge: "In this which vitalizes all things, which appears in all things, the Great, in this Brahman-wheel (*brahmacakra*) a goose (*haṃsa*, i. e. the soul)<sup>44</sup> moves, having learnt that itself and the actuator (*preritṛ*) are different. Then it content attains freedom from death (*amṛtatva*) by this." Here

<sup>43</sup> For the expression "from death to death (*mṛtyor mṛtyu*)", where *mṛtyoh* may be either gen. or abl. but is best interpreted as abl., cf OERTEL, Zum altindischen Ausdrucksverstärkungstypus *satyasya satyam* (1937) p. 25 f.

<sup>44</sup> Cf ARMAN, Untersuchungen zur prim. Seelenvorstellung II p. 138 f; HAUSER, Symbole und Erfahrung des Selbstes, Eranos Jahrbuch 1934 p. 74 f.

we especially note the figure of a wheel,<sup>45</sup> a cycle, and the stress on the individuality as that which fetters man in the cycle. We may compare Maitri VI. 28, speaking of the wheel of *saṃsāra* (*saṃsāracakra*), from which the wise man is delivered. The last words of Śvet. I. 6 are not very clear, but probably they mean that man gains deliverance from death when learning that his self and the god are identical.<sup>46</sup>

Proceeding in Śvet. we meet in I. 7 the expression *yonimukta*, delivered from the womb, i. e. from rebirth, as the contrast of being merged in Brahman. Śvet. I. 8, quoted above p. 40, speaks of deliverance from all fetters (*pāśa*). St. 10 mentions a word very unusual in the Upaniṣads, *māyā*: "By meditation upon him (the god), by union with him, and by entering into his being more and more, there is finally cessation from every illusion (*viśvamāyānivr̥tti*)."<sup>47</sup> In none of the other principal Upaniṣads does *māyā* appear in this sense of illusion. It has been a matter of some dispute among scholars whether the *māyā*-doctrine, later developed by ŚĀṂKARA, exists in the Upaniṣads or not. DEUSSEN<sup>47</sup> claimed that it was most representative of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, but the majority of scholars<sup>48</sup> have

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<sup>45</sup> MASSON-OURSSEL, *Le Saṃsāra* p. 325, finds in this stanza a metaphorical expression of what he regards as the foundation of the doctrine of *saṃsāra* (cf above p. 107). On the notion of the wheel he writes: "C'est la noria des rizières (Wasserrad), si répandue dans l'Inde et l'Indo-Chine, cette roue aux tubes de bambou qui fait passer l'eau, à volonté, de l'un à l'autre de deux biefs qu'elle met en rapport." Cf by the same author: *La noria, prototype du saṃsāra*, *Études d'orientalisme ... à la mém. de R. Linossier* II (1932) p. 420.

<sup>46</sup> This sense seems to be the most natural one in view of the context. Cf HAUSCHILD, *Die Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* (1927) p. 7.

<sup>47</sup> AGP I. 2 p. 40, 204 ff.

<sup>48</sup> E. g. OLDENBERG, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden* p. 89 ff; EDGERTON, *Sources of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, JAOS 36 (1917) p. 198 f; RADHAKRISHNAN, *Indian philosophy* I p. 188 ff; MASSON-OURSSEL, *Esquisse d'une histoire de la philosophie indienne* (1923) p. 55; STRAUSS, *Indische Philosophie* p. 46 f, 71; CHAKRAVARTI, *The philosophy of the Upanishads* (1935) p. 161 ff.

objected to this opinion. No doubt DEUSSEN found too much of the philosophy of ŚAṂKARA in the Upaniṣads, which contain no such fixed philosophical system. A developed *māyā*-doctrine does not exist in the Upaniṣads, only sayings that have served as starting-points for this doctrine.

In Maitri we meet the strongest words for despising this world as an evil. In the beginning of the Upaniṣad we find a sermon on the ugliness of everything in this world. Direct Buddhistic influence is here most probable.

(I. 2) "There was a king, Bṛhadratha by name. After having established his eldest son in the kingdom, reflecting that his body was non-eternal, he reached the state of indifference (*vairāgya*) and went forth into the forest (*aranya*). There he stood, performing extreme austerity, keeping his arm erect, looking up at the sun. At the end of a thousand (days) there came into the presence of the ascetic (*muni*), the honourable knower of the Self (*ātma-vid*) Śākāyanya, like a smokeless fire, burning as it were with glow. 'Arise, arise! Choose a boon!' said he to the king. He did obeisance to him and said: 'Sir, I am no knower of Ātman. You are one who knows its true nature, we have heard. So, do you tell us.' 'Such things used to occur. Very difficult is this question. Aikṣvāka, choose other desires,' said Śākāyanya. With his head touching that one's feet, the king uttered the speech:

(3) "Sir, in this ill-smelling, unsubstantial body, which is a conglomerate of bone, skin, muscle, marrow, flesh, semen, blood, mucus, tears, rheum, feces, urine, wind, bile, and phlegm, what is the good of enjoyment of desires? In this body which is afflicted with desire, anger, covetousness, delusion, fear, despondency, envy, separation from the desirable, union with the undesirable, hunger, thirst, senility (*jarā*), death (*mṛtyu*), disease (*roga*), sorrow, and the like, what is the good of enjoyment of desires? (4) And we see that this whole world is decaying, as these gnats, mosquitos, and the like, the grass, and the trees that arise and perish."

The king goes on speaking of great heroes who have left the world, of spirits and demons who have perished, of oceans that have dried up and mountains that have fallen down, and then he comes to the end:

(4) "In this sort of cycle of existence (*saṃsāra*), what is the good of enjoyment of desires, when after a man has fed on them, there is seen repeatedly his return (*āvartana*) here to earth? Be pleased to deliver (*uddhartum*) me. In this cycle of existence (*saṃsāra*) I am like a frog in a waterless shell. Sir, you are our way of escape, yea, you are our way of escape."

Here *saṃsāra* is used as the term of the great evil to be delivered from, and that evil is described at the same time as the return of man to earth and as the transitory character of the whole existence, including all kinds of natural phenomena. The verb used to express deliverance is here *uddharati*, bear away.

As said above p. 106, the word *saṃsāra* is not met with frequently in the principal Upaniṣads. Outside Maitri we find it only twice: once in Kaṭha, once in Śvet. The Kaṭha-stanza runs (III. 7): "He, however, who has not understanding, who is unmindful (*amanaska*) and ever impure, does not reach the goal (*pada*) but goes on to *saṃsāra*." *Saṃsāra* is the evil that awaits the unwise, the contrast of salvation, which is the goal of the wise. Of this goal it is said in the next stanza that one is not born therefrom any more (*yasmād bhūyo na jāyate*).

In Śvet. VI. 16 we get the two important words *saṃsāra* and *mokṣa* side by side. The last line of this stanza runs: *saṃsāramokṣasthitibandhaheṭuḥ*, meant as a characteristic of the god, Śiva. As most frequently in the Veda, we find in the line a play on words. In the pairs *saṃsāramokṣa* and *sthitibandha*, *saṃsāra* is the contrast of *sthitī*, meaning something flowing opposed to something that remains on the spot. Further *mokṣa* is the contrast of *bandha*: deliverance contra bondage. But in spite of these double connections the two pairs of words are not similarly formed. *Mokṣa* is the con-



trast of *saṁsāra*: *mokṣa* means deliverance from *saṁsāra*, but *bandha* and *sthiti* are not contrasts: bondage and standstill, permanence. Of all these variously connected things the god is the cause (*hetu*), and the purpose of the stanza is to praise the power of the god. As to the conception of *saṁsāra* we see that the word is used as a recognized term together with the word of salvation, *mokṣa*. At the same time the etymological sense of the word, "flowing", is clearly felt, so that it is contrasted with *sthiti*, "standing".

In conclusion it must be said that the conception of *saṁsāra* in its fully developed sense has no central place in the Veda, not even in the Upaniṣads. In a form which is most probably influenced by Buddhism, we find it best exposed in Maitri, an Upaniṣad not very representative for the Veda. In the principal Upaniṣads outside Maitri the term is met with in only two passages, which do not enter into any detailed elucidation of the conception. We have, however, tried to trace the two main elements of the idea of a cycle of existence in other Vedic texts. As to the conception of *karman*, we find in all Vedic texts the conviction that the works of man are decisive for the kind of life he may expect after death. *Karman* implies especially sacrificial merit, and consequently the way of *karman* is despised in the Upaniṣads. But the belief in the might of *karman* is not weakened. Often the meditations of the hermits center around this conception. *Karman* must bear its fruits, if not in this life so in the next one. We hear that good *karman* leads to good results, evil *karman* to evil results. But we hear also that all doers of *karman* are fettered in the cycle, from which the wise man may be delivered.

As to the other main element of the *saṁsāra*-conception, the idea of a rebirth to this life, we find in the ritual texts ideas of a rebirth in this world in one's offspring, of a rebirth to a life in another world, and of a repeated death in that world. In the Upaniṣads the ideas of rebirth have various forms in the

few texts speaking of it somewhat elaborately. In some texts we hear of a rebirth to a new life on earth. This life may take the shape of a man but also that of an animal. The exact transition from the ideas met with in the Brāhmaṇas to those of the Upaniṣads cannot be demonstrated. It cannot be denied that the latter appear rather suddenly. That is why many scholars have proposed influences from the popular religion of the country. Only it must be observed that the origin of these supposed influences has not been evidenced.

Why has this cycle of existence come to be regarded as an evil to be delivered from, yes, as the Great Evil? *Samsāra* and *mokṣa* are combined already in Śvet., and since these ancient times they have belonged to one another through the whole history of India. Modern sympathizers with the doctrines of *karman* and rebirth, theosophists and others, accept them as blissful truths,<sup>49</sup> while in India they have been regarded as terrifying truths. This earthly life has come to mean an evil, and salvation has been sought in a world without individuality. It cannot be said, however, that this negative outlook permeates the Vedic literature to any great extent. We find clear expressions of it first in those Upaniṣads that are influenced from Buddhism or stand near to it. Buddhism first preaches radically the evilness of being fettered in *samsāra*, and this attitude has probably reacted on Brahmanic orthodoxy. Therefore modern Indian writers are at least partly right when stressing that the outlook of the Upaniṣads on human life is mainly positive, even though it is exaggerated as RADHAKRISHNAN<sup>50</sup> to say that in them we find "a healthy joy in the life of the world".

It seems indisputable, however, that these texts also contain a tendency to a negative outlook on life. To the development of this outlook many factors have contributed, mutually further-

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<sup>49</sup> E. g. HUMPHREYS, *Karma and rebirth* (1943) passim. In the same way the outlook on the cycle of existence was more positive in ancient Greece. See OLTRAMARE op. cit. p. 102 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Indian philosophy I p. 219, cf p. 186 ff.

ing one another. Often climatic reasons are stressed,<sup>51</sup> and probably rightly. The Aryan invaders must have had the same experience as many Westerners going to India nowadays: that the heat of India does not favour activity but easily gives rise to a weary view of life. Perhaps we may go even still further back in history. The same attitude towards life has probably existed among the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India. The meditating Śiva, found in Mohenjo-daro may be taken as a symptom of that.

Another factor may have been the theoretical consequences of the doctrine of Ātman.<sup>52</sup> When the indivisible Ātman is regarded as the Highest Good, the individual world appears as an evil. We have seen that in the Upaniṣads this world is stamped as an evil only when contrasted to the Brahman-Ātman-world.

Finally it may be observed that the rôle of the Upaniṣads in the orthodox Vedic system makes a negative outlook on life natural in these texts. When all kinds of social duties are fulfilled, the wise man bids farewell to active life and prepares for death in peaceful meditations. In this stage of life, which in the orthodox system shall follow when the other stages have been duly passed through, and in which the Upaniṣads serve as meditation texts, the attitude towards pleasures and duties gets a weary and negative stamp. The work of Buddha has consisted not least in breaking the orthodox arrangement and making a negative view of life a common property.

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<sup>51</sup> E. g. by BLOOMFIELD, *The religion of the Veda* p. 264 ff.

<sup>52</sup> This point is stressed e. g. by OLDENBERG, *Buddha*, 8.—9. Aufl. p. 45 f, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden* p. 115 ff; OLTRAMARE *op. cit.* p. 70 ff, 102 ff; STRAUSS *op. cit.* p. 49 f.

## VI.

# SIN

In the preceding chapters I have reviewed various kinds of evil from which the Vedic ṛṣis sought deliverance. In chapter III I dealt with evils dominating the social stage of the orthodox life, in chapter V I was concerned with questions appearing mainly in the texts intended for the hermit life. Death, dealt with separately in chapter IV, is looked upon from various aspects, but appears in both kinds of texts as a great evil. In my review of words for various evils, appearing together with *muñcati* and other words for deliver, there is one category of words, not yet treated. We come to these words, if we ask for the causes of the evils hitherto reviewed. Then we are not so much concerned with general questions of the origin of evil, as with the personal ones: why has this evil come to me? What can I do to escape it? If an evil is to disappear, its cause must be removed.

Such questions lead us to the conception of sin. As a rule this English word is used in a moralistic sense: man sins when committing something forbidden by certain divine commandments.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the word obtains a wider sense. OTTO stresses in *Sünde und Urschuld* (1932) p. 1 ff that sin is a religious, not a moralistic conception, defining it as "der Widerwert zu dem Wert des Heiligen".<sup>2</sup> MENSCHING speaks in *Die Idee der*

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<sup>1</sup> Cf CASARTELLI, *L'idée du péché chez les indo-éranien*s de l'antiquité, IVme congr. sci. int. d. catholiques I (1898) p. 134; CLEMEN, *Das Problem der Sünde* (1936) p. 1; TUXEN, *Die Grundlegung der Moral nach indischer Auffassung*, *Acta Or.* 14 (1935—36) p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf OTTO, *Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen* (1932) p. 161 f.

Sünde (1931) p. 5 of sin as “Hemmnis in den Beziehungen zu einem Transzendenten” and says in a later book<sup>3</sup> that originally sin is a purely religious idea, having nothing to do with ethics, but that by and by it is filled with ethical content. As to the New Testament, modern theology<sup>4</sup> stresses that there sin is met with as a power keeping man in captivity.

Our conception of sin may indicate something committed by man as well as something outside man, seizing him as an enemy. Dealing with the Vedic texts it seems wise to restrict the translation “sin” to such words as may be constructed with words for “do, commit”. It should not be used as a translation for words of a more general character, which is sometimes done.<sup>5</sup> But in this chapter we shall see that Vedic words for sin characterize sin both as something committed by man and as something outside man.

When the Vedic ṛṣi is struck with disease, he finds the cause in the anger of a god because of something which he has committed contrary to the will of the god. In RV VII. 86. 3 we find a ṛṣi who has been slain by Varuṇa, asking for the reason:<sup>6</sup>

“Wishing to know my sin (*enas*) I make inquiry,  
I go about to all the wise and ask them;  
One and the self-same thing even sages tell me:  
‘Varuṇa hath with thee hot indignation (*hṛṇāte*).’”

This indignation of the god is sometimes called *heḍas*. “Far from us be (*pari-vṛjyāḥ*) the wrath (*heḍas*) of Varuṇa”, the ṛṣi prays in RV VII. 84. 2. The cause of this wrath is called *heḍana*. *Devaheḍana* is an offense against the gods, committed by man, a sin. “We have not committed any great sin (*duṣkṛta*) against you secretly, nor openly, O Vasus, done anything that offendeth gods (*devaheḍana*)” (RV X. 100. 7). In RV X. 37. 12 we hear

<sup>3</sup> Gut und Böse (1941) p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> E. g. NYGREN, Romarbrevet (1945) p. 249.

<sup>5</sup> Cf above p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Translation after GRISWOLD, The religion of the Ṛigveda (1923) p. 121.

that *devaheḍana* may be committed with the tongue: "If, O gods, we have committed some grievous offense (*devaheḍana*) with the tongue or with thoughtlessness of mind, lay, O Vasus, that sin (*enas*) upon Arāvan, who leads us into evil (*abhi-ducchunāyate*).” In AV and YV we find *devaheḍana* used in the so called *kuṣmāṇḍa*-formula, with which prayers of forgiveness of sins are introduced: "If, O gods, we, O gods, have done anything that offendeth gods (*yad devā devaheḍanam*)" (e. g. AV VI. 114. 1, TB III. 7. 12. 1).<sup>7</sup>

More frequent than *heḍana* is a word which in a quotation has already been met with as its synonym: *enas*. This word, probably related to *inoti*, "to press upon", "to use force",<sup>8</sup> is the nearest equivalent in the Veda to our word "sin". Sometimes the word may signify something committed against the ṛṣis by their enemies: "Cast down thy sharp thunderbolt, O Indra, on him who commits evil (*enas*) against the men praising thee" (RV VII. 18. 18). But mostly the ṛṣis pray to be forgiven for the *enas* that they have committed themselves, knowingly or unknowingly.<sup>9</sup>

Without penetrating into the sense of the word in Avesta it might be of interest just to note that we find it there as *aēnah*. In Yasna 31. 13 we read:<sup>10</sup> "What open or what secret (sins) are punished through wisdom by a sentence, or who, for a slight sin (*aēnah*) incurs a very great atonement, watching-over these-things with flashing eye, thou dost observe them all through justice." In these lines there is more than the word *aēnah* that

<sup>7</sup> See further BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 757.

<sup>8</sup> WALDE-POKORNY I p. 1; LEFEVER, The Vedic idea of sin (1935) p. 34. This etymology, which is not of any great help in understanding the sense of the word, is doubted by HOPKINS, Ethics of India (1924) p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Sometimes the sense is doubtful, e. g. in RV VII. 20. 1, where Indra is said to be a protector (*trātr*) from *enas*.

<sup>10</sup> Translation after M. W. SMITH, Studies in the syntax of the Gāthās of Zarathustra (1929) p. 78. Cf B. GEIGER, Die Aməša Spəntas (1916) p. 175; NYBERG, Irans forntida religioner (1937) p. 108 (Germ. transl.: Die Religionen des Alten Iran, 1938, p. 98).

is common with Vedic expressions. The word for justice is *aśa*, the same word as Vedic *ṛta* (cf below p. 142 f). Furthermore, the word for atonement, *bug-*, is related to Vedic *bhuñjati*, forms of which may be used with *enas*. In Avesta the ordinary sense of *baog-* is "loosen" (a girdle).<sup>11</sup> We have it further in the name of "saviour", *baoxtar*, in later language. Vedic *bhuñjati* means "give to eat, feed", medium *bhuñkte* "eat". Together with *enas* it appears in aorist, having the sense "atone for". In RV VI. 51. 7 (cf. RV VII. 52. 2) the ṛṣi prays: "Let us not atone for (*mā bhujema*) the sin (*enas*) committed by others, not for that deed (*karman*) that ye condemn (*cayadhve*), O Vasus." A similar, though not identical construction is met with in RV VII. 88. 6: "If, O Varuṇa, thy true and dear ally, thy friend, committeth sins (*āgas*) against thee, let us not, Mighty One, atone as sinners (*mā ta enasvanto yakṣin bhujema*). Give shelter as a sage to the singer."

With a form of *muñcati*, *enas* appears in RV I. 24. 9, where the ṛṣi prays to Varuṇa: "Deliver (*pra-mumugdhi*) us from whatever sin (*enas*) we have committed."<sup>12</sup> Another stanza (14) of the same hymn constructs *enas* with *śrathayati*: "With homage, with sacrifices, with offerings, we turn down (*ava-īmahe*) thy wrath (*heḍas*), O Varuṇa. Wise Asura, loosen (*śiśrathah*) as a ruling king from us our committed sins (*enas*)."

Another example of *enas* with *muñcati* is met with in RV VIII. 18, a hymn mainly directed to the Ādityas, who in this hymn are said to be Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga and Savitr. The ṛṣi mentions various kinds of evil from which he wants to be delivered: enmity (*dveṣas*), enemies (*sṛdh*), physical weakness (*rapas*), disease (*amīvā*), malignity (*durmati*), distress (*amhas*), want (*āmati*), disaster (*durita*) etc. In the midst of these things sin (*enas*) is mentioned (12): "Grant to us, O Ādityas,

<sup>11</sup> BARTHOLOMAE col. 916 f, 967. B. GEIGER op. cit. p. 175 believes that *bug-*, atonement, is not derived from *baog-*, loosen.

<sup>12</sup> On the appearance of this prayer in other Samhitās see BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 331 (*kṛtaṁ cid enaḥ*).

the shelter that delivers (*mumocati*) the sinner (*enasvat*) from any sin (*enas*), Ye rich ones." Sin is here regarded as an evil of the same kind as other evils, but in attracting the verb *muñcati* it differs from them.

In one of the quotations, now given, *āgas* has been met with as a synonym of *enas*. In RV *āgas*<sup>13</sup> is less frequent than *enas*, but *anāgas* (or *anāga*), "without sin", is more frequent than *anenas*. An example with *anāgas* is RV I. 24. 15, already quoted above p. 37: "May we be sinless (*anāgas*) to Aditi in thy law (*vrata*), Āditya." In RV IV. 12. 4 we find *anāgas*, *āgas*, and *enas* together: "Most youthful god, whatever sin (*āgas*) we have committed in a human way, through thoughtlessness, make us sinless (*anāga*) to Aditi. Take away (*vi-śīsrathaḥ*) entirely our sins (*enas*), Agni." As is seen from these two examples, *anāgas* is combined especially with Aditi. Scholars have had varying opinions on the character of this female and not very concrete divinity.<sup>14</sup> The material at hand does not permit any final decision. When her name is used in the expression "sinless to Aditi", it brings to mind not a concrete divinity but only the sound of the word, meaning "not fettered".

In the famous prayer RV VII. 86, of which in this chapter I have already quoted st. 3, where *enas* is used, we find *āgas* in st. 4:

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<sup>13</sup> WALDE-POKORNY I p. 38 connects *āgas* with Greek ἄγος, guilt. Cf LOEWE, Angelsächsisch ece, Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung 48 (1918) p. 99 f. The etymology remains doubtful, however. Cf HOPKINS op. cit. p. 32. P. 18, HOPKINS declares that *āgas* is an older word than *enas*, but he does not give any motivation for such a judgment. LEFEVER op. cit. p. 26, cf p. 34, says that *āgas* "may be taken to signify sin in its deepest and most ethical sense". That *āgas* has a more ethical sense than *enas* cannot be proved. Furthermore, it cannot be accepted that "the most ethical sense" of a conception is the "deepest" one.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. VODSKOV, Sjøledyrkelse og Naturdyrkelse (1897) p. 321 ff; NEISSER, Zum Wörterbuch des Rgveda I (1924) p. 20 ff, II (1930) p. 12 f, with further references. Cf also above p. 69.



"O Varuṇa, what was my chief transgression (*āgas*),  
That thou wouldst slay a friend who sings thy praises?  
Tell me, god undeceived and sovereign, guiltless (*anenas*)  
Would I appease thee then with adoration."

The ṛṣi is not conscious of any sin, but he is slain in some way. Consequently, he has done something against the will of the god. The background of the prayer is the conviction that disease and mishap are intimately connected with sin. The sin need not be the sin of the ṛṣi himself, however, as we hear in the next stanza (5) of the same hymn:

"Set us free (*ava-srja*) from the misdeeds (*drugdha*) of our fathers,  
From those that we ourselves have perpetrated;  
Like cattle-thief, O King, like calf rope-fastened,  
So set thou free Vasiṣṭha from the fetter (*dāman*)."

The word for "sin" is here *drugdha*, related with Druh, the demon-name dealt with above p. 53 f. It is here used as a synonym for *enas* and *āgas*. The ṛṣi wants deliverance from his own sins as well as from those committed by his fathers. When the family ties are strong, as is the case in ancient<sup>15</sup> as well as in modern India, the fates of the generations cannot be distinguished. The misfortune of an individual hits the whole household, and in the same way the whole household becomes responsible for the sins of the individual. Already earlier in this chapter I have quoted another prayer of deliverance from sins committed by others.

Continuing in RV VII.86 we meet in the next stanza, 6, a new and most important word for sin, *anṛta*, i. e. that which is not in accordance with *ṛta*:

"'Twas not mine own will, Varuṇa, 'twas delusion,  
Drink, anger, dice, or lack of thought that caused it;

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<sup>15</sup> On family life in ancient India see e.g. MASSON-OURSSEL, *L'Inde antique* (1939) p. 74 ff.

An older man has led astray a younger,  
Not even sleep protects a man from evil (*anṛta*)."

The opinion is sometimes expressed that RV VII. 86 demonstrates a real repentance of a contrite sinner.<sup>16</sup> This stanza seems to be incompatible with such a view. In the preceding stanzas the ṛṣi has lamented over his misfortune which he thinks caused by some committed sin, and now he wants to put the whole blame of this unknown sin on various things: delusion, drink, anger, dice, lack of thought, an older man. There is no sign of a repenting sinner taking the guilt on himself. Directly the poet frees his own will from responsibility. The sin may have been committed even in sleep. For this eventuality we may think e.g. of dreams in which the poet has played an evil part, and of nightly pollutions, for which later texts prescribe certain expiations.<sup>17</sup> As a rule *anṛta* signifies sins connected with speech, but it may also have a wider content.<sup>18</sup>

The Vasiṣṭha-hymns RV VII. 86—89, directed to Varuṇa, are outstanding in RV for their personal touch. In them the ṛṣis are not so stiff and official in their ritualism as they are in the majority of the Vedic hymns. RV VII. 89 is a cry for mercy from a man struck with dropsy, standing in "the midst of waters" and fearing to die. In the last stanza he combines his disease with committed sins, but there the personal touch is weakened, and the prayer becomes very general. This stanza, 5, is often used in various expiatory rituals,<sup>19</sup> as is also the case with other confessional stanzas appearing in RV.<sup>20</sup> The words used for sin are *abhidroha* and *enas*:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> SIQUEIRA, Sin and salvation in the early Rig-veda, *Anthropos* 28 (1933) p. 182; TUXEN op. cit. p. 2 f.

<sup>17</sup> GAMPERT, Die Sühnezeremonien in der altindischen Rechtsliteratur (1939) p. 150 f.

<sup>18</sup> Cf below p. 144, 152 f.

<sup>19</sup> BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 738: *yat kim cedam varuṇa*.

<sup>20</sup> Cf GAMPERT op. cit. p. 191.

<sup>21</sup> Translation after GRISWOLD op. cit. p. 123.

“Whatever wrong (*abhidroha*) we men commit against the race  
Of heavenly ones, O Varuṇa, whatever law (*dharman*)  
Of thine we here have broken through thoughtlessness,  
For that transgression (*enas*) do not punish us, O god.”

In this stanza sin is clearly said to be a transgression of the law of Varuṇa. I shall soon come back to the conception of law, but first I want to note two other words for sin appearing in RV: *ṛṇa* and *kilbiṣa*.

*Ṛṇa* means “debt” and is used mainly in the relations between human creatures. But even the relations between man and god can be seen in the same aspect. When in RV II. 28. 9 the poet prays to Varuṇa: “Remove the sins (*ṛṇa*) I have committed, let me not suffer (*mā bhojam*), King, for the one committed by others”, *ṛṇa* is used exactly in the same way as *enas* and *āgas*.

*Kilbiṣa* is used in RV X. 97. 16 in the same manner as *heḍana*, combined with *deva*. To the plants the prayer is directed, already quoted above p. 38: “May they (the plants) deliver (*muñcantu*) me from that which comes from a curse, from that which comes from Varuṇa, from the fetter of Yama, from every sin against the gods (*devakilbiṣa*).” The plants take away sin as well as other evils.

The sins of man consist of his transgressions of heavenly laws. In RV VII. 89. 5 we have found the law of Varuṇa expressed by the word *dharman*. This word has obtained an immense importance in later Hinduism.<sup>22</sup> In the Vedic literature it is less dominating and has other words at its side: *dhāman*, *ṛta*, *vrata*. In ŚB V. 3. 3. 9, however, we find Varuṇa characterized as “lord of *dharman* (*dharmapati*)”. Of these Vedic words for “law, order” *ṛta* is the most interesting one. We have already found it in one of the words for sin, *anṛta*. In Avesta

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. MASSON-OURSSEL, Note sur l'acception, à travers la civilisation indienne, du mot *dharma*, JA 11. 19 (1922) p. 269 ff; NEGELEIN, Weltanschauung des indogermanischen Asiens (1924) p. 102 f; DESHMUKH, The origin and development of religion (1933) p. 20 ff; TUXEN op. cit. p. 4 ff.

*ṛta* is met with as *aśa*, and in Iranian names from more ancient times as *arta*.<sup>23</sup> No Western word seems to give a full equivalence. German scholars have proposed various German words as the most exact rendering: OLDENBERG<sup>24</sup> "Ordnung", B. GEIGER<sup>25</sup> "Recht", LÜDERS<sup>26</sup> "Wahrheit". Here I am not concerned with *ṛta* in all its aspects. The statement of BERGAIGNE<sup>27</sup> remains true that *dharman*, *dhāman*, *ṛta*, and *vrata* are used side by side as expressions of a law that rules similarly in nature, in the sacrifice, and in moral life. These parts of life are indissolubly connected,<sup>28</sup> and are ruled by the same *ṛta*, as the law is preferably called in RV. The other words may be used of the same law,<sup>29</sup> which does not imply, of course, that all these words cover each other in every respect. As a rule, Varuṇa appears as the watcher of the law. He is the king, punishing transgressions of the law, and very naturally such transgressions may be called *anṛta*.

As examples of hymns using varying words for this heavenly law RV II. 28 and X. 10 may be mentioned. In RV II. 28 both *ṛta* and *vrata* occur: "Loosen (*vi-śrathāya*) from me the sin (*āgas*) as a bond (*raśanā*). May we swell, O Varuṇa, thy spring

<sup>23</sup> Cf SPIEGEL, *Die arische Periode* (1887) p. 139 ff; PORZIG, *Kleinasiatisch-indische Beziehungen*, ZII 5 (1927) p. 266; ZIMMERMANN, *Asha in the Gāthās of the Avesta and Ṛta in the Ṛgveda*, *Modi mem. vol.* (1930) p. 414 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Zur Religion und Mythologie des Veda*, NGG 1915 p. 167 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Die Aməša Spəntas* p. 166 ff; *Ṛta und Verwandtes*, WZKM 41 (1934) p. 107 ff.

<sup>26</sup> *Die magische Kraft der Wahrheit im alten Indien*, ZDMG 98 (1944) p. 3 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *La religion védique* III p. 210 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Cf LUDWIG, *Der Rigveda* III p. 291; LEFEVER *op. cit.* p. 1 ff.

<sup>29</sup> LEFEVER *op. cit.* p. 11, says that there is a relationship of use between these words, but that "in actual and legitimate meaning, *ṛta* is totally different from the other conceptions". It seems quite senseless in this way to distinguish between the "use" of a word and its "actual meaning".

(*khū*) of law (*ṛta*)”<sup>30</sup> (5) and “On thee (Varuṇa) the laws (*vrata*) are founded” (8). In RV X.10 (cf AV XVIII.1) we meet in st.4 *ṛta* and *anṛta* as contrasts, meaning proper and improper things. St.5 speaks of the laws, *vrata*, of Tvaṣṭṛ. And in st.6 (in AV st.7) Yama, who refuses to commit the sin of engaging in sexual intercourse with his sister, says: “Great is the law (*dhāman*) of Mitra and Varuṇa.”<sup>30a</sup>

Another example of how *ṛta* and *anṛta* are contrasted is met with in RV I.152.1, where Mitra-Varuṇa are said to conquer *anṛta* and keep to *ṛta*. *Anṛta* may also be contrasted to *satya*. This word is not appropriately translated with “law” as *ṛta*. It means “reality”, from *sat*, “that which exists”. Usually it is translated with “truth”, and that may be done, if we take truth in the same wide sense as reality. What is true and real is also good, and when e.g. in RV VII.49.3 (cf AV I.33.2) Varuṇa is said to see (*avapaśyan*) *satyānṛte*, we may translate “good and evil”. As *satya* is usually translated with “truth”, so *anṛta* is usually translated with “untruth”. As a rule it appears with words for speaking. An example is RV I.23.22 (=X.9.8): “Bear away, O waters, whatever evil (*durita*) is in me, if I have done wrong (*abhi-dudroha*) or if I have sworn falsely (*anṛtam*)”. In RV V.12.4 *anṛta* and *asat vacas*, “false speech”, appear as parallels: “Agni, who protect the place of *anṛta*? Who are the protectors of *asat vacas*?”

In this review of various expressions for sin we have seen that in RV the ideas of sin and deliverance from sin are mostly connected with Varuṇa. It has sometimes been proposed that these ideas should so exclusively belong to Varuṇa and his nearest companions, the Ādityas, that the other gods might have received them from him.<sup>31</sup> This seems to be exaggerated.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf BLOOMFIELD, The religion of the Veda p. 126, on the Iranian parallel in Yasna X.4.

<sup>30a</sup> The *vratas* of Tvaṣṭṛ and the *dhāman* of Mitra-Varuṇa have different contents. Cf GELDNER, Der Rīgveda in Auswahl II p. 147.

<sup>31</sup> So KETH, The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads (1925) p. 244.

After all, sin is mentioned not so seldom in hymns to other gods, even though they are never the objects of whole confessional prayers, as is Varuṇa. Indra, the fighting war-god, has not much to do with law and order.<sup>32</sup> With a fine play on words RV VII. 83. 9 connects Indra with the slaying of the *vr̥tras*, Varuṇa with the watching over the *vr̥tas*. Indra himself is the sinner among the gods, having slain the Brahman Viśvarūpa (RV X. 8. 9, TS II. 5. 1. 1 ff, ŚB I. 6. 3. 1 ff).<sup>33</sup> Yet in RV II. 12. 10 Indra is said to slay those who commit sin (*enas*), and in RV VIII. 45. 34 the ṛṣi prays that Indra shall not punish him for his *āgas*.<sup>34</sup>

Agni is fairly often said to remove sin.<sup>35</sup> The first stanza of RV I. 189 is often used in the sacrificial rituals and is quoted also in the Upaniṣads:<sup>36</sup> "Lead us, Agni, by a good way to wealth, thou god knowing all the ways. Remove (*yuyodhī*) from us the sin (*enas*) that leads us astray. We will bring thee the best adoration."

In a similar way petitions of deliverance from sin are directed to Savitr̥ (RV IV. 54. 3), the Maruts (RV VII. 57. 4, VII. 58. 5), Soma (RV I. 179. 5), Soma-Rudra (RV VI. 74. 3 = AV VII. 42. 2). In RV I. 185. 8 the hymn to Heaven and Earth is said to remove sin. Finally, we find in RV X. 15. 6 (= AV XVIII. 1. 52) even the fathers (*pitr̥*) addressed in the same way: "Do not punish us, O Fathers, for any sin (*āgas*) which we commit in a human way."

Thus the ṛṣis speak of the anger of various gods, and ascribe their wrath to sins, committed by men. Every god may be

<sup>32</sup> Cf BERGAIGNE, La religion védique III p. 205 ff; LOMMEL, Der arische Kriegsgott (1939) p. 17.

<sup>33</sup> Cf BUSCHARDT, Vṛtra p. 34 ff, 87.

<sup>34</sup> Cf also RV X. 89. 8, where Indra is called a punisher of guilt (*ṛṇayā*), who crushes wickedness (*vr̥jina*) and those who transgress (*pra-minanti*) the law (*dhāman*) of Varuṇa and Mitra.

<sup>35</sup> On this fact BLOOMFIELD, The religion of the Veda p. 163, comments: "The sacrifice, of course, is the staple means of conciliating the gods when they are supposed to be angry."

<sup>36</sup> BLOOMFIELD, A Vedic concordance p. 24 f: *agne naya supathā*.

appeased and forgive sins when addressed with prayers and sacrifices. Yet it remains true that we hear more of sins and transgressions in connection with Varuṇa than with other gods. Varuṇa and the confessional hymns addressed to him appear as something for themselves, as a "Fremdkörper" in RV. The similarities between these hymns and Babylonian and Hebrew hymns of the same kind are great.<sup>37</sup> Scholars have had different opinions on the question, whether we should see here direct influences from Babylonia or not, a question connected with that of the origins of Varuṇa (cf above p. 60). B. GEIGER<sup>38</sup> supposes such an influence, SIQUEIRA<sup>39</sup> and KEITH<sup>40</sup> deny it.<sup>41</sup> There are possibilities of a Semitic influence at various stages. The pre-Aryan culture of India has had close communications with Mesopotamia, but also the invading Aryans may have had communications with Semitic peoples before their arrival in India. On the other hand, the Aryans themselves have had ideas of laws and transgressions, and the conception of *ṛta* seems to be Indo-Iranian.

Looking back on the ideas of sin in RV, we may sum them up in a few points. Sin is a transgression of heavenly law. It has not much to do with the will of the sinner,<sup>42</sup> and the ṛṣi

<sup>37</sup> WIDENGREN, *The Accadian and Hebrew psalms of lamentation* (1936), gives many examples of prayers similar to the Vedic ones. See e.g. p. 95 ff, 260 ff.

<sup>38</sup> *Die Aməša Spəntas* p. 157 ff.

<sup>39</sup> SIQUEIRA op. cit. p. 181.

<sup>40</sup> KEITH op. cit. p. 246.

<sup>41</sup> Cf also GRISWOLD op. cit. p. 147 ff with discussion and further references.

<sup>42</sup> This is one of the reasons why KEITH op. cit. p. 244, says that "the sense of sin is only very feebly represented in the hymns". HEIMANN, *Studien zur Eigenart indischen Denkens* p. 31, sees the fact that the will of man has so little importance compared with the deed itself, against the background of the macrocosmical view of life, "makrokosmische Grundeinstellung". PETRAZZONI, *La confessione dei peccati I* (1929) p. 53 f, sees the same fact as a trait characteristic not only for India but

prays for deliverance from sins committed by others in the same way as for those committed by himself. Consequently, we find no personal repentance, a fact that finds a further explanation in the official character of RV. There are no clear distinctions made between sin and other kinds of evil. Disease may be regarded as a consequence of sin, but not always is there such a distinction between cause and effect.<sup>43</sup> How the texts make a distinction between committed and non-committed sin at the same time as they declare both kinds of evil for sin, may be illustrated by RV X. 63. 8: "O gods, deliver (*pari-ṣiptā*) us to-day from committed (*kṛta*), from non-committed (*akṛta*) sin (*enas*)."

Sin, understood as transgression, is usually not concretised. The character of the hymns makes it natural to think of ritual mistakes when other kinds of sin are not explicitly mentioned, as e.g. a sexual sin in RV X. 10. 12. Some hymns are more intimately than others connected with the ritual. So e.g. RV VII. 93 is knit to the kindling of the sacrificial fire, and when *āgas* appears in st. 7 it is natural to think of mistakes committed in that performance.

In AV we come somewhat closer to ordinary life, and the texts give us a more concrete picture of what is understood by sin. The conception of sin has mainly the same traits as in RV, and in the two Saṃhitās many lines, dealing with deliverance from it, are identical. In the texts that are met with only in AV we hear more of sin as a physical evil than as a transgression of heavenly laws, however.

The same words for sin are met with in AV as in RV: *heḍana*,

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for "primitive thinking" on the whole. Cf also SCHEFTLOWITZ, Die Sündentilgung durch Wasser, ARW 17 (1914) p. 375 ff.

<sup>43</sup> Cf HOPKINS, Ethics of India p. 25 f: "The suffering is so much the result of sin that it is itself a sin. Ill-health is immoral in that it is a sign of divine wrath; sickness is punishment for sin and is even the objectified form of sin."



*enas*, *āgas*, *drugdha*, *duṣkṛta*, *ṛṇa*, *kilbiṣa*, *anṛta*. Above p. 72 ff we have seen forms of *muñcati* frequently used in AV to express the deliverance from disease. Sin and disease being most intimately connected in AV, we find *muñcati* used frequently with words for sin, too.

Songs containing prayers of deliverance from sin occur in various parts of AV, but they are concentrated especially in book VI, where the hymns 111—121 are of this type. AV VI. 115 may be quoted in full, as in its three verses it contains many characteristic expressions: "If knowing, if unknowing, we have committed sins (*enas*), do ye deliver (*muñcata*) us, O Viśvedevāḥ, from that, accordant. — If waking, if sleeping, I sinful (*enasya*) have committed sin (*enas*), let what is and what is to be deliver (*vi-muñcatām*) me from that, as from a post. — Being delivered (*vi-mumucāna*) as if from a post, as one that has sweated from filth on bathing, like sacrificial butter purified by a purifier, let all cleanse (*śumbhantu*) me from sin (*enas*)."<sup>44</sup> Here we meet in a concentrated form various typical features of the Vedic ideas of deliverance from evil, especially from sin: sins committed knowingly or unknowingly, sleeping or waking; the terms *enas*, *enasya* and *muñcati*; the metaphor of being delivered from a post.

AV VI. 114 begins with the formula *yad devā devahedanam*, of which I have spoken above p. 137. The Ādityas are asked to deliver (*muñcata*) from all sorts of sin, especially ritual ones.

Another kind of sin is mentioned in AV VI. 112: *parivitti*, "overslaughting", i. e. the marriage of a younger before an elder brother.<sup>45</sup> The sin has resulted in disease, seizure of Grāhī, and the purpose of the song is deliverance from the sin and the disease, regarded as a unity. In 1 Agni is asked to loosen (*vi-cṛta*) the fetters (*pāsa*) of Grāhī. In 2 the same thing is

<sup>44</sup> The last verse returns in other Vedic texts, some of which have *muñcantu* instead of *śumbhantu*. WHITNEY AV p. 365.

<sup>45</sup> Cf BLOOMFIELD, Hymns of the Atharva-Veda (1897) p. 521 ff; WHITNEY AV p. 362.

expressed by the words *unmuñca pāsān*, and father, son and mother are mentioned together: "Deliver (*muñca*) all, father and son, mother." It seems as if on a concrete occasion father, mother and the eldest son, who is especially mentioned in the following verse, have been struck with the disease. We hear expressively of three fetters.<sup>46</sup> That also the younger brother, although not mentioned here, is a sinner is pointed out by Kauśika Sūtra 46. 26 ff.<sup>47</sup> The third verse is directed to Pūṣan: "With what bonds (*pāśa*) the overslaughed one is bound apart, applied and tied up on each limb — let them be released for they are releasers (*vimuc*), wipe off (*mṛkṣva*) the evils (*durita*) on the embryo-slayer (*bhrūnahan*), O Pūṣan."<sup>48</sup>

The embryo-slayer as the worst sinner appears in other Vedic texts, too, e. g. MS IV. 1. 9.<sup>49</sup> We have it also in the next hymn of AV, VI. 113, intimately connected with VI. 112. Somebody is stricken by Grāhi, and the prayer is expressed that the evil shall be removed to the embryo-slayer. Of special interest here is the appearance of Tṛta.<sup>50</sup> The gods remove the sin committed by them on Tṛta, who lets it go on to human beings. "On Tṛta the gods wiped off (*amṛjata*) that sin (*enas*). Tṛta wiped it off on human beings. If from that Grāhi hath reached thee, let the

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<sup>46</sup> BLOOMFIELD op. cit. p. 526 explains the number three as a solemn number without concrete significance and translates the compound *pitāputrau* with "father, sons" (p. 165).

<sup>47</sup> Cf GAMPERT op. cit. p. 164 f with further references.

<sup>48</sup> The conceptions *vimuc* and *vimocana* are especially connected with Pūṣan in RV I. 42. 1 and RV VIII. 4. 15 f. There are various opinions of the sense of *vimuc* in this connection. See e. g. FLENSBURG, *Bidrag till Rigvedas mytologi* (1909) p. 35 ff. For the present study this question is of no importance.

<sup>49</sup> Cf BLOOMFIELD op. cit. p. 521; GAMPERT op. cit. p. 62 ff with further references.

<sup>50</sup> On this obscure figure who is sometimes called Tṛta, sometimes Trita, see especially RÖNNOW, *Trita Āptya* (1927). Earlier treatises are discussed there p. V ff. AV VI. 113 is discussed p. 84 ff. Later, Tṛta has been dealt with by OTTO, *Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen* (1962) p. 60 ff.

gods make it disappear for thee by the incantation (*brahman*). Enter thou after the beams, the smokes, O Evil (*pāpman*). Go unto the mists or also to the fogs. Disappear along those foams of the rivers. Wipe off evils on the embryo-slayer, O Pūṣan" (1—2). (The last words are identical with those of the preceding hymn.) Sin, disease, evil and mishap appear together without any distinctions, and it is all believed to be derived from the gods through Ṛta.

The verb used for the wiping off of sins in the preceding quotations is *apa-mṛjate*. There is a plant *apāmārga*, which has special powers of wiping off sins, perhaps "by virtue of its superficial etymology, as well as certain peculiarities of its natural history".<sup>51</sup> To this plant AV VII. 65. 2 is directed: "The sin (*duṣkṛta*), the pollution (*śamala*), what we have done evilly (*pāpayā*), by thee, O all-ways-facing Apāmārga, we wipe that off (*apa-mṛjmahe*)". The sin, here called *duṣkṛta*, evil deed, is just a pollution, a stain, *śamala*, that can be wiped off. In the same way sin may also be called *ripṛa*, uncleanness, as in AV XII. 2. Here in st. 11 *ripṛa* and *enas* are parallelised. In st. 12 Agni himself is said to be delivered (*mucyamāna*) from sin (*enas*), and he has delivered (*amoc*) the worshippers from curse (*aśasti*). In the next verse, 13, the worshippers say that they wipe off (*mṛjmahe*) all pollutions (*ripṛa*) on the purifying Agni and thus become clean for the sacrifice. And in 40 we read: "What uncleanness (*ripṛa*), pollution (*śamala*) we have committed, and what wrong-doing (*duṣkṛta*), from that let the waters cleanse (*śumbhantu*) me." We see that there is no distinction made between deliverance from sin, from uncleanness, and from curse. Sin is uncleanness, and uncleanness is something that man commits. Fire, water,<sup>52</sup> plants deliver from every kind of evil.

<sup>51</sup> BLOOMFIELD, The Atharvaveda p. 67.

<sup>52</sup> As to water cf above p. 144 and SCHEFFTELOWITZ, Die Sündentilgung durch Wasser, ARW 17 (1914) p. 358 ff.

As sin may come from the gods through Tr̥ta, it may come through an inauspicious bird, too. Above p. 69 we have heard of the dove as the evil-bringing messenger of Nir̥ti. In AV VII. 64 the evil that comes through Nir̥ti's bird is called sin: "What here the black bird flying out has let fall, let the waters protect me from all that evil (*durita*), that distress (*am̐has*). What here the black bird hath stroked down with thy mouth, O Nir̥ti, let Agni Gārhapatya deliver (*pra-muñcatu*) me from that sin (*enas*).<sup>58</sup>" No distinction is made between *durita*, *am̐has*, and *enas* as evils which come to man through a black bird. From all that evil, waters and fire can deliver. A form of *muñcati* is used for expressing the deliverance.

As other examples of the close connection between sin and disease, AV V. 30 and VIII. 7 may be quoted. In AV V. 30 the priest stands at the side of a sick man, and by means of his song he drives away both the disease and the sins: "In that thou hast shown malice (*dudrohitha*), hast cursed at woman or at man through thoughtlessness — deliverance and release (*unmocanapramocane*), both I speak for thee with my voice. In that thou art prostrate from sin (*enas*) that is mother-committed and that is father-committed — deliverance and release, both I speak for thee with my voice" (3—4). The other verses speak more directly of the disease, and the song ends with the words "Do not die before old age". The priest has the full power of removing disease as well as sin. We hear both of self-committed sins, which are here concretised to curses, and of sins committed by others. A man is sick, and consequently some sin must have been committed. The priest does not know of any special sin, and in order to cure the man he must deliver him from every imaginable sin.<sup>58</sup> In a preceding verse the curse of enemies, too, is proposed as a cause of the disease, the priest delivering from this evil, too.

<sup>58</sup> Cf LOMMEL, Eine arische Form magischer Gottesanrufung, Acta Or. 10 (1981—82) p. 374: "Beschwörung . . . ist eben dadurch zwingend, dass kein möglicher Fall ausgelassen wird."

In AV VIII. 7. 3 we find the disease called *enasya*, sinful, caused by sin. Plants and water drive it away. "Waters were the beginning, heavenly herbs. They have made disappear from every limb the sinful (*enasya*) disease (*yakṣma*).” In the last stanza (28) the ṛṣi says that he has delivered (*ud-ahārṣam*) the sick man from the fetter (*padbīṣa*) of Yama and from every sin against the gods (*devakilbiṣa*, cf RV X. 97. 16 above p. 142).

In very clear words AV X. 3. 8 speaks of deliverance from sin committed by others: "What sin (*enas*) my mother, what my father, and what my own brothers, what we have done, from that shall this divine forest-tree shield (*vārayiṣyate*) us."

Finally, we should observe the use of the word *anṛta*. It is used in AV mainly in the same way as in RV. Often it is contrasted with *satya*. In AV IV. 9. 7 the ṛṣi says that he will speak truth, not untruth (*satyaṁ vakṣyāmi nānṛtam*). In the famous Varuṇa-hymn AV IV. 16 the ṛṣi prays in st. 6 that the fetters (*pāśa*) of Varuṇa shall bind him who speaks improperly (*anṛtam vadat*) but deliver (*ati-sṛjantu*) the speaker of *satya* (*satyavādin*). And in 7 the hope is expressed that the speaker of *anṛta* (*anṛtavāc*) shall not be delivered (*mā mocī*) from Varuṇa. In AV I. 10, too, *anṛta* is connected with Varuṇa. A man has been struck with dropsy (*arṇava*), which is a sign of Varuṇa's wrath, caused by some *anṛta*, committed by men. "Homage be to thy wrath (*manyu*), King Varuṇa, for, O formidable one, thou dost note every evil deed (*drugdha*) . . . If thou hast spoken improperly (*anṛtam*) with the tongue, much wrong (*vṛjina*), I deliver (*muñcāmi*) thee from king Varuṇa, whose laws are true (*satyadharman*)" (2—3). *Anṛta* is here a transgression committed by the tongue against the law, *dharman*, of Varuṇa.

In these examples *anṛta* has been connected with verbs for speech. In a wider sense the word appears in AV VI. 71. 3, where we read of eating food *anṛtena*, in an improper way. Interesting it is, finally, to observe the use of the contrast *satya* and *anṛta* in AV VII. 70. 1—2, a charm against a rival and

his sacrifice: "May Nirṛti together with death (*mṛtyu*) smite his sacrifice before it becomes reality (*satya*). The sorcerers (*yātudhāna*), Nirṛti, and Rakṣas, let them smite his reality (*satya*) with unreality (*anṛta*)."

From AV and its non-official charms I proceed to the official rituals as we meet them in YV and in the Brāhmaṇas. There sin has the same aspects as in RV and AV. It is a transgression of heavenly laws, especially those of Varuṇa, and it is a physical evil that can be wiped or washed off. In AV we have found several examples of sins committed in social life. The texts that I am turning to now have as RV a character making it natural for ritual sins to dominate.

A concrete expression of what a ritual sin may consist of is met with in TS III. 1. 4. 3: "If the victim (*paśu*) has uttered a cry, or striketh its breast with its feet, may Agni deliver (*muñcatu*) me from that sin (*enas*), from all trouble (*aṁhas*)."

The sin from which the sacrificer wants to be delivered does not consist of anything he has committed himself but of something committed by the animal that is sacrificed.

The ritual transgressions, performed during the sacrifice, are often expiated through various forms of *prāyaścitti*.<sup>54</sup> A number of such expiatory rites are collected in ŚB XII. 4. 1. Often the *prāyaścitti* merely consists of the recital of a mantra. So e. g. in ŚB III. 3. 3. 13: "Now he (Soma) approaches him while he is seated, and when he has come, he rises: thereby he does wrong and breaks the vow. This, then, is his expiation (*prāyaścitti*) of that, and thus no wrong is thereby done, and he does not break the vow. Therefore he says: 'Keep me, O Agni, from the evil way (*duṣcarita*), let me share in the right way (*sucarita*).'" Here the transgression is an inevitable part of the ritual proce-

<sup>54</sup> On this term see GAMPERT op. cit. p. 23 ff. G. gives ample references to earlier treatises of the expiatory ceremonies. Here I only mention one, dealing directly with the Brāhmaṇas: WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, L'expiation (*prāyaścitti*) dans les Brāhmaṇa, Bull. int. d. l'Ac. Pol. 1935 p. 287 ff.

dure.<sup>55</sup> Elsewhere it may consist of e. g. speaking when speaking is not allowed (ŚB III. 2. 1. 38). Also the gods must perform *prāyaścitti*. If transgressions are inevitable in the sacrifice, this concerns also the gods. Above p. 92 we have heard of the sacrifices of the gods. The gods may sin with their speech, too. In ŚB III. 4. 3. 1 we hear that they must perform a *prāyaścitti*, because they have spoken evil (*pāpa*) to one another. Indra's slaying of Viśvarūpa as still another sin of a god has been observed above p. 145.

An expiatory rite of a singular kind takes place in the Varuṇapraghāsa. It does not concern ritual transgressions but sins committed in social life. We read of it in VS III. 44—47, commented upon in ŚB II. 5. 2. 20 ff.<sup>56</sup> The priest asks the wife of the sacrificer: "With whom holdest thou intercourse?" ŚB continues: "When a woman who belongs to one man carries on intercourse with another, she commits something that pertains to Varuṇa. He therefore asks her, lest she should sacrifice with a secret pang in her mind. For when confessed, the sin (*enas*) becomes less, since it becomes truth (*satya*). This is why he asks her. And whatever she confesses not, that will turn out injurious to her relatives." After the confession the sins are expiated through a sacrifice accompanied by the mantra: "Whatever sin (*enas*) we have committed in the village (*grāma*) or in the forest (*araṇya*), in company or by ourselves, that we expiate by sacrifice (*ava-yajāmahe*)." In its comments ŚB explains sins in company (*sabhāyām*) as sins against man, and sins by ourselves (*indriye*) as sins against the gods. This is a way of drawing down the gods to the human sphere, a usual tendency in the Veda. Here the operation is easily performed by means of the word *indriya*, similar to Indra.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Cf also ŚB III. 9. 4. 17.

<sup>56</sup> Cf JOHANSSON, Über die altindische Göttin Dhiṣāṇā (1917) p. 62 f; PETTAZZONI op. cit. p. 56 ff, 238 ff.

<sup>57</sup> There are varying opinions as to whether there is an original relationship between Indra and *indriya*. NEISSER, Zum Wörterbuch des

In an expiatory rite towards the end of Agniṣṭoma<sup>58</sup> a mantra with typical, general expressions is met with: "Of sin committed by<sup>59</sup> the gods (*devakṛta enas*) thou art the expiation (*avayajana*). Of sin committed by men thou art the expiation. Of sin committed by fathers thou art the expiation. Of sin committed by myself (*ātmakṛta*) thou art the expiation. Of every sin thou art the expiation. The sin that I have committed knowingly, and that unknowingly, of all that sin thou art the expiation" (VS VIII. 13).

A special occasion for the expiation of sins, both ritual and social ones, is the Avabhṛtha, the bath concluding several sacrificial rituals. The Avabhṛtha of the Agniṣṭoma is dealt with in VS VIII. 23—27, commented upon in ŚB IV. 4. 5.<sup>60</sup> The commentary begins thus: "He now betakes himself to the Avabhṛtha. The reason why he betakes himself to the Avabhṛtha is this. What vital sap there has been in him (Soma and the sacrificer),<sup>61</sup> that (sap) of his he (the priest) has produced for the offerings. Now that body (the Soma-husks), there is no sap in it; (yet) it is not to be cast away. They take it down to the water, and — water being sap — he puts that sap into it. Thus

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Rgveda I p. 160 f, denies it; DANDEKAR, *Der vedische Mensch* (1938) p. 21 f, believes in it.

<sup>58</sup> Cf CALAND-HENRY, *L'Agniṣṭoma* (1906—07) p. 388.

<sup>59</sup> The translation of *devakṛta enas* and the parallel expressions of the context is doubtful. GRIFFITH, *The texts of the White Yajurveda* p. 62, translates "sin against the Gods". In the parallel TS III. 2.5.7, KEITH, *The Veda of the Black Yajus school* p. 245, translates "... by ...", CALAND op. cit. p. 388 "... par ...". Grammatically both translations seem to be justifiable. Sin against the gods is a more natural conception than sin committed by the gods, especially in texts speaking of human purification from sin. But on the other hand the Vedic texts know of sins committed by gods, too, and relate how such sins may come to men and pollute them (cf above p. 149). It is not improbable that the texts imply both possibilities of meaning. The formulas want to be as comprehensive as possible.

<sup>60</sup> Cf TS I. 4. 45 and CALAND-HENRY op. cit. p. 398 ff.

<sup>61</sup> The words in brackets are by EGGELENG, *SBE* 26 p. 378 f.



he unites him with that sap, and thus he produces him from it — he (Soma), even when produced, produces him (the sacrificer). And because they take it down (*avaharanti*) to the water, therefore (the bath is called) Avabhṛtha.” Here the bath is said to restore the strength of the sacrificer. The name is explained from *ava-harati*. The correct etymology is, of course, to derive it from *ava-bharati*, bear away (the sense of *ava-harati* is about the same, however). And it is not only the Soma-husks that are taken down to the water. The sins, too, are taken away. They are taken away as well by Varuṇa as by the waters. Varuṇa’s character of water-god is eagerly stressed in these texts. ŚB IV. 4. 5. 10 says that standing pools of flowing water belong to Varuṇa, and that in this way the water constitutes the connection between Varuṇa and the Avabhṛtha. The mantras are directed both to Varuṇa and to the water. Directly to the purifying water is a central text of the Avabhṛtha uttered (VS VIII. 27, ŚB IV. 4. 5. 22): “O restless purifying bath, thou glidest onward restlessly.”<sup>62</sup> May I with the help of gods remove (*ava-(a)ṃśiṣam*) the sin (*enas*) committed against<sup>63</sup> the gods, and with the help of mortals that committed against mortals.” In another paragraph ŚB says that the priest delivers (*pramuñcati*) the sacrificer “from every fetter of Varuṇa (*varuṇa-pāśa*), from everything pertaining to Varuṇa (*varuṇya*)” (ŚB IV. 4. 5. 11). The result of the bath for the sacrificer is then in ŚB IV. 4. 5. 23 said to be this: “Even as a snake is delivered (*nirmucyeta*) from its skin,<sup>64</sup> so is he delivered (*nirmucyate*) from all evil (*pāpman*). There is not in him even as much sin (*enas*) as there is in a toothless child.”

In the Avabhṛtha of the Sautrāmaṇī we meet in a prayer the *kuṣmāṇḍa*-formula (VS XX. 14—17): “If, O gods, we, O gods,

<sup>62</sup> This is the translation by GRIFFITH op. cit. p. 64 of the obscure words: *avabhṛtha nicumpuna nicerurasi nicumpunaḥ*.

<sup>63</sup> So GRIFFITH loc. cit. and EGGELING, SBE 26 p. 385. CALAND-HENRY op. cit. p. 400: “par”. Cf note 59 above.

<sup>64</sup> On the metaphor see above p. 34 f.

have done anything that offendeth gods, may Agni deliver (*muñcatu*) me from that sin (*enas*) and from all distress (*aṁhas*). If in the day-time or at night we have committed sins (*enas*), may Vāyu deliver me from that sin and from all distress. If when awake or in our sleep<sup>65</sup> we have committed sins, may Sūrya deliver me from that sin and from all distress. Each sin that we have committed in the village (*grāma*) or in the forest (*araṇya*), in company or by ourselves,<sup>66</sup> towards Śūdra or Arya, or to either's disadvantage (MAHĪDHARA comments: the sacrificer and his wife), of that thou art the expiation (*avayajana*)". In this prayer we observe the same traits as in the confessional Samhitā-hymns, discussed above. The sacrificer wants forgiveness not only for his own sins but also for those of others, in first rank those of his family. All sorts of occasions are mentioned, when possibly sins may have been committed; even sleep is mentioned. Various gods appear as deliverers from the sins. No angry god shall be forgotten. All these various traits are developed in greater detail in a similar prayer in TB III. 7. 12. That text gives greater concreteness to the sins, exemplifying them e.g. thus: "what with our voice we have spoken improperly (*anṛtam*)" (2), "what we have committed improperly (*anṛtam*) with our voice, with our mind (*manas*), with our arms, with our thighs, with our knees, with our penis" (5), "what sins (*kilbiṣa*) I have committed with my hands, tempted by the dice" (6).

A characteristic trait of these and similar prayers is the fact that they are intended to embrace all imaginable cases of committed sins. This all-embracing trait makes them less personally touching, and we find nothing in them of anxiety or repentance. This, of course, is natural in an official formula, but it is difficult to perceive any feeling of personal contrition even behind

<sup>65</sup> SB XII. 9. 2. 2 comments: "what is awake is men, and what is asleep is the Fathers. He thus delivers (*muñcati*) him from sin against men (*manuṣyakilbiṣa*) and from sin against Fathers (*pitṛkilbiṣa*)."

<sup>66</sup> SB XII. 9. 2. 3 glosses *indriya* with *daiva*. Cf above p. 154.

the words. On the other hand, we clearly see that there are ideas of sins, really committed in social life outside the ritual performance. We cannot, as is sometimes done,<sup>67</sup> say that the purifying Avabhṛtha has no other purpose than to transpose the sacrificer to the profane state from the holy sphere, into which he has entered through the introductory rites of the sacrifice, the Dikṣā. It would be unnatural to speak of sin (*enas*) in such concrete terms, if only "the mysterious potency" (so KEITH) were indicated.

In the Brāhmaṇas we hear of sins also in other texts than in those that deal with expiatory rites. When in ŚB I. 7. 4. 1 ff Prajāpati wishes to engage in sexual intercourse with his own daughter, the gods regard this as a sin (*āgas*). Evidently the counterpart among men of the deed of Prajāpati is regarded as a sin, even though it is not explicitly stated. In AB III. 33 Prajāpati is said to perform "a deed not done". The authority of custom thus gives a deed its stamp of sin.<sup>68</sup>

The danger of making ritual mistakes is illustrated in ŚB I. 7. 3. 19: "Now Bhāllaveya made the invitation formula (consist of) an anuṣṭubh verse, and the offering formula of a triṣṭubh verse thinking: 'I thus obtain (the benefits) of both'. He fell from the cart, and in falling broke his arm. He reflected: 'This has befallen because of something or other I have done.' He then bethought himself of this: '(It has befallen) because of some violation (*viloma*) on my part, of the proper course of the sacrifice.' Hence one must not violate the proper course (of sacrificial performance). But let both (formulas) be verses of the same metre, either both anuṣṭubh verses, or both triṣṭubh verses." As usual, we find the sin, here consisting in a wrong use of Vedic metres, intimately connected with a physical mishap. Here sin and mishap are clearly distinguished by reflection as cause and effect. Also on other occasions we hear

<sup>67</sup> OLDENBERG, Die Religion des Veda, 2. Aufl. p. 409; KEITH op. cit. p. 308.

<sup>68</sup> Cf the same expression in the Old Testament, e.g. Gen. 34. 7.

how ritual transgressions have physical evil as their effect. ŚB II. 3. 4. 18 says that by committing ritual mistakes in the Agnihotra one injures one's self, life, vigour and offspring.

As we may expect, sins in relation to the Brahmanas are especially severe. ŚB IV. 1. 2. 4 speaks of the sin (*enas*) of contemplating the oppression of the priesthood (*brahman*). We hear of the sin of not giving due gifts, *dakṣiṇās*, e. g. in ŚB I. 2. 3. Trita, whom we have met with before, appears here together with two other Āptyas: Dvita and Ekata (1). They were together with Indra when Viśvarūpa was slain. Indra was delivered (*amucyata*) from the sin, because he is a god (2). The guilt came instead on the Āptyas, but these wipe it off (*mṛjate*) upon him who makes an offering without a *dakṣiṇā* (4). The non-giver of the *dakṣiṇā* has here taken the place of the embryo-slayer of AV VI. 113.<sup>69</sup> In TB III. 2. 8. 10 the slayer of a Brahman (*brahmahan*) takes this place as the worst of sinners.<sup>70</sup> ŚB XIII. 3. 5. 4 deals with a *prāyaścitti* for the killing of a Brahman.<sup>71</sup> In the course of the Aśvamedha an oblation shall be made to death (*mṛtyu*), and this has the effect of expiating even future killings of Brahmanas. This sounds simple, but the Aśvamedha is, indeed, no simple sacrifice.<sup>72</sup>

The word *anṛta* is used in the same way in ŚB as in the Samhitās: especially connected with speech, but with a wider sense than our "untruth". LEVI<sup>73</sup> maintained that in the Brāhmaṇas truth (*satya*) has a strictly limited, ritual meaning: "c'est l'exactitude dans les pratiques et les formules du sacrifice". Then *anṛta*, the contrast of *satya*, would imply nothing but a mistake in the ritual performance, having no moral significance.

<sup>69</sup> See above p. 149 f.

<sup>70</sup> On the two sins *bhrūnahatyā* and *brahmahatyā* in relation to one another see GAMPERT op. cit. p. 30 f, 62 ff.

<sup>71</sup> Cf note in SBE 44 p. 341.

<sup>72</sup> Cf DUMONT, L'Aśvamedha (1927) p. I: "Seul un roi victorieux, dont la puissance est incontestée, peut l'offrir."

<sup>73</sup> La doctrine du sacrifice (1898) p. 39.

LÉVI has been criticized on this point by other scholars, however.<sup>74</sup> As *ṛta* has to do with the physical, the moral and the cultic spheres (cf above p. 143), the same is true of *anṛta*. As in the *Saṃhitās*, so in the *Brāhmaṇas* the sense of this word must not be limited to one of these spheres, although in the latter not *ṛta* but *satya* appears as its regular contrast. *Satya* and *anṛta* are contrasted in the very beginning of ŚB. ŚB I. 1. 1. 1 says that a man speaking *anṛta* is not fit to sacrifice. By introductory rites the sacrificer passes from *anṛta* to *satya*. The gods are *satyam*, men are *anṛtam*, and consequently the sacrificer passes from the sphere of men to the sphere of gods (4). MAHĪDHARA comments that man's existence is *anṛta* on account of its perishableness.<sup>75</sup> In translating such passages it is difficult to find good equivalents for *anṛta*. EGGELING translates "untruth", OLTRAMARE<sup>76</sup> says "erreur" and "mensonge". We may use "untruth" only if we bear in mind that it must be interpreted in a very wide sense. We are reminded of TB III. 7. 12, quoted above p. 157, where we hear of *anṛta* committed with the voice, but also of *anṛta* committed with arms, legs, and penis.<sup>77</sup>

From this review of the ideas of sin that appear in the *Saṃhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* we see that in these scriptures these ideas have mainly the same character. Sin is regarded as a transgression of heavenly law, as it is best expressed in the word *anṛta*: that which is not according to *ṛta*, the law ruling nature, sacrifice, and social life. But the transgression is not intimately connected with human will. It comes to man as a pollution, and it makes its existence apparent in disease. Disease and sins are sometimes combined as effect and cause both in the *Saṃhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas*, but often this distinc-

<sup>74</sup> E. g. HOPKINS op. cit. p. 62; LEFEVER op. cit. p. 58 ff.

<sup>75</sup> SBE 12 p. 3.

<sup>76</sup> L'histoire des idées théosophiques I p. 22 f. Cf also WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA op. cit. p. 242, criticized by GAMPERT op. cit. p. 263.

<sup>77</sup> On *anṛta* in ŚB see further e. g. II. 2. 2. 19 f, IX. 5. 1. 12 ff.

tion is not made. Thus sin is an evil, not essentially different from the evils dealt with in the preceding chapters. KERTH, *Sin* (Hindu), ERE 11 p. 560 f, supposes that sin "was to the Vedic Indian primarily the actual pollution of disease present in his body and only by a gradual process of moral development was the disease interpreted as the punishment inflicted for an act, or thought, or word, displeasing to gods who exacted obedience to moral laws." The texts do not prove such a "gradual process of moral development". Neither can a development the other way, from a moral conception of sin to a physical one, be proved. It seems wise not to speak of any historical evolution on this point, but of various conceptions of sin, existing at the same time, sometimes involved in one another, sometimes isolated in various texts.

We do not hear much of the concrete forms of sin. These are dependent on the character of the texts. The texts are ritual, and consequently we usually hear of ritual transgressions. The sacrifice has its place in the social stage of life. The social sins that are mentioned, belong preeminently to two spheres: that of sexual life and that of speech.

The different character of the various ritual texts have some influence on the ideas of sin, reflected in them. The solemn RV-hymns speak of sin as an offence against the gods, foremost the mighty lord of the law, King Varuṇa. In AV, belonging to private ritual, the conception of sin as an outward pollution is dominant. Even in YV and the Brāhmaṇas sin is mainly conceived of as an outward thing that can be mechanically removed through sacrificial rites. But in no part of these ritual texts does one of these two aspects exclude the other.

Greater are the differences between the ideas of sin in the ritual texts on one side, in the Upaniṣads on the other side. The sins mentioned in the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas are of a ritual and social kind. In the situation of life reflected in the

texts of the forest hermits, however, sin may be expected to have quite a different character.

In the preceding chapters I have demonstrated that to the forest hermit the greatest evil is not disease or premature death, but separation from the Highest Unity. The expounding of the ideas of this Highest Good dominates the Upaniṣads and gives its stamp also to the conceptions of evil. Above we have seen that in the ritual texts sin is often regarded as the cause of disease, although cause and effect are not always distinguished. Now we shall come with similar questions to the Upaniṣads. What fetters man in this individual life?

Such a fetter is in the first place the desire for worldly things. The wise man leaves desires behind. "He who passes beyond (*atyeti*) hunger and thirst, sorrow (*śoka*), delusion (*moha*), old age (*jarā*), death (*mṛtyu*) — Brahmans who know this *ātman* overcome desire (*eṣaṇā*) for sons, desire for wealth, desire for worlds, and live the life of beggars (*bhikṣācarya*). For desire for sons is desire for wealth, and desire for wealth is desire for worlds, for both these are merely desires. Therefore let a Brahman become disgusted with learning (*pāṇḍitya*) and desire to live as a child (*bālyena*). When he has become disgusted with the state of childhood and with learning, then he becomes an ascetic (*muni*). When he has become disgusted both with the non-ascetic state and with the ascetic state, then he becomes a Brahman" (Brh. III. 5). In this teaching of Yājñavalkya we see how desire is the evil that is between man and salvation. This desire (*eṣaṇā*) is of different kinds, and is overcome gradually in the stages of the orthodox life. The desires for wealth etc. are overcome on entering the *bhikṣu*-stage. Final salvation means deliverance from every kind of desire.

Brh. IV. 4. 22 speaks of the desire in similar, partly in identical terms. First, Ātman is described. He is untouched by good (*sādhu*) and evil (*asādhu*) work (*karman*). "Such a one the Brahmans want to know by studying the Veda, by sacri-

fice, by gifts, by austerity, by fasting. On knowing him, one becomes an ascetic (*muni*). Desiring (*icchat*) him only as their world, the wanderers (*pravṛājīn*) wander forth (*pra-vrajanti*). Knowing this, the ancients did not desire (*kāmayante*) offspring, saying: 'What shall we do with offspring, we who have this Ātman as this world?' Having risen above desire (*eṣaṇā*) for sons, desire for wealth, desire for worlds, they lived the life of beggars. For desire for sons is desire for wealth, and desire for wealth is desire for worlds, for both these are merely desires."

The word used in these two quotations for the nomen "desire" is *eṣaṇā*, from *icchatī*, seek, desire. As verbs we find both *icchatī* and *kāmayate*. The latter is formed from the more frequent one of the terms for the nomen "desire", *kāma*. We find this word, constructed with a form of *muñcati*, e.g. in a stanza, quoted in Bṛh. IV. 4. 7 and Kaṭha VI. 14: "When are liberated (*pra-mucyante*) all the desires (*kāma*) that lodge in one's heart, then a mortal becomes free from death (*amṛta*), therein he reaches Brahman."

*Kāma* is a very frequent word in the Upaniṣads. Man must become free from desire, if he is to reach salvation. As a rule, however, this is not expressed with *muñcati* or similar words for deliver, but with *āpnotī*, reach. A man who has reached his desires is free from them. Very often we hear that in one way or another, man gets all his desires fulfilled. In Śvet. I. 11 quoted above p. 105, it is said of the highest salvation that there man becomes *āptakāma*, i.e. one who gets his desires fulfilled.<sup>78</sup> That in this way desires shall not be abandoned before they are fulfilled is in accordance with the whole Vedic system. Desire for worldly things shall not be abandoned before the hermit stage, when man has had his worldly life. In that stage he can speak rather disdainfully of lower desires. An example with *kāma* in this sense is Kaṭha IV. 2, speaking of

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<sup>78</sup> For further examples see JACOB, A concordance p. 291 ff.



*parācaḥ kāmāḥ*, outward desires. Then, in the hermit stage, he directs his desires inwards, gets them fulfilled, and in this way he is delivered from desires.

Furthermore, we may note that the *kāma* conception is not only psychological, indicating the desires of man. As many other Vedic conceptions it has also a macrocosmical side, and this not only in the Upaniṣads. In the famous creation hymn RV. X. 129, in st. 4 (cf AV XIX. 52. 1), *kāma* is said to have come into being in the beginning as the first seed of *manas*, even before the gods.<sup>79</sup> And in the Brāhmaṇas we hear often that Prajāpati desires (*kāmayate*) when creating various things (e. g. ŚB VI. 1. 1. 8). When the uncreated Ātman is regarded as the Highest Good, consequently *Kāma* as the origin of creation is the Highest Evil, keeping man in this life of individuality and separation.

The desire cannot be distinguished from *avidyā*, ignorance and false knowledge. Also this conception must be understood as at the same time man's lack of right knowledge and a universal power, binding man in the cycle of existence. In Buddhism we find both the desire and the false knowledge systematically arranged in the chain of causation, *pratītyasamutpāda*.<sup>80</sup> In the Veda we find no similar systematical arrangement. *Avidyā* comes first in the *pratītyasamutpāda*, but in the Upaniṣads we hear more of desire than of false knowledge. We find the conception mainly in the younger Upaniṣads, although *vidyā* is frequently mentioned also in the Brāhmaṇas (cf. above p. 117).

*Vidyā* and *avidyā* are clearly contrasted in Kaṭha II. 4, where we also hear of desires (*kāma*). Death has tempted Naciketas with all sorts of worldly pleasures. Naciketas repudiates the

<sup>79</sup> Cf EDGERTON, The philosophic materials of the Atharva Veda, Studies in honor of M. Bloomfield (1920) p. 122; FALK, Il mito psicologico nell'India antica (1939) p. 307 ff.

<sup>80</sup> Vinayapitaka, Mahāvagga I. 1. 2. Cf OLDENBERG, Buddha, 8.—9. Aufl. p. 56; TUXEN, Buddha p. 200 ff, 221 ff.

lower desires, those of wealth, etc., and chooses knowledge: "Widely opposite and asunder are these two: false knowledge (*avidyā*) and what is known as knowledge (*vidyā*). I think Naciketas desirous of obtaining *vidyā*. The manifold desires (*kāma*) rend thee not." *Vidyā* is the delivering knowledge of Ātman that Death then explains. Of this knowledge we have already observed that it is not an ordinary discursive knowledge that can be won through learning. Kaṭha II. 23 = Muṇḍ. III. 2. 3 has been quoted above p. 104. Another significant passage on this matter is Kena 11: "It is conceived of (*mata*) by him by whom it is not conceived of, he, by whom it is conceived of, knows it not. It is not understood (*avijñāta*) by those who understand it, it is understood by those who understand it not." And the next stanza of Kena speaks of freedom from death (*amṛtatva*, *amṛta*), saying that one finds it through *vidyā*.

In view of such praise of *vidyā* it is perplexing to find *vidyā* spoken of as a great evil. This is the case in Īśā 9 = Brh. IV. 4. 10. "Into blind darkness enter they that worship *avidyā*, into darkness greater than that, as it were, they that delight in *vidyā*." In the traces of ŚAṂKARA, DEUSSEN<sup>81</sup> means that *vidyā* is "der Versuch, zu Gott zu gelangen, indem man ihn als zu erkennendes (und zu verehrendes) Objekt sich gegenüberstellt". In view of the meaning of *vidyā* in other texts as exemplified above, this is hardly a justifiable interpretation. SCHRADER<sup>82</sup> discusses the text thoroughly, and asserts that in the Mādhyandina recension, where the arrangement of the stanzas is another than in the Kāṇva recension, *vidyā* and *avidyā* originally mean consciousness and unconsciousness, neither of which characterizes the Absolute. In the Kāṇva recension the terms have been interpreted as meaning *ātmaavidyā* resp. *karman*, and the whole purpose of Īśā should be to teach that salvation is not won through knowledge alone, but through knowledge and

<sup>81</sup> Sechzig Upanishad's p. 526.

<sup>82</sup> A critical study of Īśopaniṣad, IA 62 (1933) p. 207 ff.

work together.<sup>83</sup> St. 11 says: "With knowledge (*vidyā*) and non-knowledge (*avidyā*), he who this pair conjointly knows, with non-knowledge passing over death, with knowledge wins freedom from death (*amṛta*).” Here clearly both *avidyā* and *vidyā* are said to be necessary for gaining deliverance from death, while the stanza quoted above means that each, taken alone, does not lead to salvation.

Already Max MÜLLER<sup>84</sup> stressed the importance of understanding this text with the system of various stages of life as a background, and in this he is probably right. According to the orthodox system one must pass through the social stage before entering the hermit stage. This means that the knowledge of *ātman* is of no use for him who has not performed his due works: *vidyā* is of no use for him who has not first practised *avidyā*.

Anyway, it is certainly justifiable to interpret *avidyā* as aiming at the practice of the sacrifice. We see it clearly in Muṇḍ. I. 2, where it is said that through the sacrifice men can never come outside the world of merits. They "go again to old age and death" (7). To be fettered in this world of merits, won through the sacrifice, is to be fettered in *avidyā*. "Those abiding in the midst of *avidyā*, self-wise, thinking themselves learned, hard smitten, go around deluded, like blind men led by one who is himself blind" (8, cf. Kāṭha II. 5). Also the next stanzas speak of these doers of work (*karmin*) as living in *avidyā* and of their fate of returning to "this world or lower".

Here we see how *karman* and *avidyā* are intimately connected. Still closer are the relations between *karman* and *kāma*. The sounds of the words are similar, and so it sometimes may be doubtful which of them we should read. Muṇḍ. III. 2. 2

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<sup>83</sup> BARUA, A history of pre-Buddhistic Indian philosophy (1921) p. 258 ff, advances a similar view. According to him Īśā is a reply to "the grave charge which the Muṇḍakas, and with them many other schools of recluse philosophers framed against the upholders of the Āśrama-theory and of the system of sacrifices."

<sup>84</sup> The Upanishads I (1879) p. 319.

runs: "He who in fancy forms desires (*kāma*) is born here and there because of his desires (*kāmabhiḥ*). But of him whose desire is satisfied (*pariṣṭakāma*), who is a perfected soul (*kṛtātman*), all desires even here on earth vanish away." HERTEL,<sup>85</sup> always keen on changing the text, calling his changes "Verbesserungen", means that we shall read *karmabhiḥ* instead of *kāmabhiḥ*. As a matter of fact, *kāmabhiḥ* is an irregular form, but also ŚAṂKARA read the text thus. For the sense of the text it is of no great importance whether we read "desires" or "works", and just this fact shows us that the conceptions are intimately related.

In Brh. IV. 4. 5 we have more direct proofs of how the connections between *kāma* and *karman* are established: "According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become. The doer of good (*sādhukārin*) becomes good. The doer of evil (*pāpakārin*) becomes evil. One becomes good (*punya*) by good action (*karman*), bad (*pāpa*) by bad action. But people say: 'This person (*puruṣa*) is made of desires (*kāma*) only'. As is his desire, such is his resolve (*kratu*). As is his resolve, such the action (*karman*) he performs. What action he performs, that he procures for himself (*abhisamṣadyate*)". The text continues by quoting a stanza (cf above p. 122) in which it is said that the man who desires (*kāmayamāna*) receives the fruits of his work (*karman*) in another world from which he then returns to this world of *karman* again. But, says the text, he who is without desires (*akāmayamāna*, *akāma*, *niṣkāma*), whose desire is fulfilled (*āptakāma*), whose desire is the soul (*ātmakāma*), he goes to Brahman. Then follows the stanza quoted above p. 163, saying that man becomes free from death (*amṛta*) when his desires (*kāma*) are released (*pra-mucyante*).

In this text we see how salvation means deliverance from desires (*kāma*) as well as from works (*karman*). By desire

<sup>85</sup> Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad (1924) p. 44 f. In Indian tradition this alteration finds support in the commentary of NĀRĀYAṆA (see JACOB, A concordance p. 298).

man is fettered in the world of works. He performs works according to his desires, and he reaps the fruits of his works in this world or in another. As long as he is bound by *kāma* and *karman* he cannot get out of the cycle of existence.<sup>86</sup>

We see that on one hand all kinds of works are regarded as evil as they fetter man in the cycle of existence, but that on the other hand the texts know very well how to distinguish between good and evil works. This double attitude is fundamental for the ethics of the Upaniṣads. The more we hear of salvation, the less any importance is attached to the distinction between good works and evil ones. Some scholars<sup>87</sup> have been led by this fact to the opinion that the Upaniṣads should be indifferent to morality. In a somewhat parallel way criticism has often been advanced against Christianity. When in the New Testament the salvation by faith, not by works, is preached, a difficulty with regard to the foundation of ethics arises, in many ways similar to that which is met with in the Upaniṣads. That from other points of view the attitudes to works are most divergent in the New Testament and in the Upaniṣads, need not be dealt with here. The parallel difficulty may warn us, however, not too easily to interpret the Vedic attitude as licentiousness and contempt of morality.

Most expressively many texts state that the deliverance taught by them, is not disturbed by evil works. Kauṣ. I. 4 says of the wise man who reaches the world of Brahman that he shakes off his good and evil deeds. "Then, just as one driving a chariot looks down upon the two chariot-wheels, thus he looks down upon day and night, thus upon good deeds and evil deeds (*sukṛtaduṣkrte*), and upon all pairs of opposites. This one,

<sup>86</sup> Cf further DASGUPTA, A history of Indian philosophy I p. 56 f; FALK op. cit. p. 346.

<sup>87</sup> E. g. HUME, The thirteen principal Upanishads p. 58 ff. The morality of the Upaniṣads is defended, though in ways that cannot be wholly accepted, e. g. by HOPKINS, Ethics of India p. 63 ff; RADHAKRISHNAN, Indian philosophy I p. 223 ff; LEFEVER op. cit. p. 74 ff. Cf also DATTA, Moksha, or the Vedāntic release, JRAS New Series 20 (1888) p. 513 ff.

devoid of good deeds (*vi-sukṛta*), devoid of evil deeds (*vi-duṣkṛta*), a knower of Brahman, unto very Brahman goes on." In the same Upaniṣad, III. 1, we find examples of the evil deeds that do not harm the wise man: "He who knows me (Indra, the context gives examples of his sins, which have not injured him) — by no deed (*karman*) whatsoever of his is his world injured, not by stealing (*steya*), not by killing an embryo (*bhrūnahatyā*), not by the murder of his mother, not by the murder of his father. If he has done any evil (*pāpa*), the dark colour departs not from his face." And in Brh. V. 14. 8 we find the same statement in a comprehensive sentence: "Even so one who knows this, although he commits very much evil (*pāpa*), consumes it all and becomes clean and pure, ageless and free from death (*amṛta*)."

These quotations contain strong expressions of the greatness of salvation. The man that reaches the goal leaves every deed, be it the worst of all sins, behind. But at the same time as the texts proclaim that evil deeds do not hinder salvation, they do not accept these evil deeds as good. Stealing and killing are mentioned as examples of deeds that remain evil.

When dealing with the ideas of a cycle of existence, we have seen that the Upaniṣads teach different destinies according to different merits. The end of the Chānd.-text on these matters has not been quoted above and may be quoted here (V. 10. 8—10): "As to this, there is the following verse: 'The plunderer (*stena*) of gold, he who drinks liquor (*surā*), the invader of a teacher's bed, the Brahman-killer, these four sink downward, and fifth, he who consorts with them.' But he who knows these five fires thus, is not stained with evil (*pāpman*), even though consorting with those people. He becomes pure, clean, possessor of a pure world who knows this, yea, he who knows this." Here evil works are said to be punished through "sinking downward". As to those consorting with the evil-doers it is said that they share the same fate, but the deliverance taught by the Upaniṣad is great enough to save them.

For the evil works that are mentioned now and then in the

Upaniṣads the typical words for sin, met with in the ritual texts: *enas*, *āgas* etc., are not used. In the Upaniṣads *enas* appears only when RV I. 189. 1 is quoted in Brh. V. 15. 1 and in Īśā 18.<sup>88</sup> Sometimes we find *anṛta*, however, as the contrast of *satya*, e. g. in Muṇḍ. III. 1. 6: "Truth (*satya*) alone conquers, not falsehood (*anṛta*)."<sup>88</sup> The context speaks of *satya*, austerity (*tapas*), right knowledge (*jñāna*) and chastity (*brahmacarya*) as means to salvation. This should be understood in the way that such things are of importance as preparations for the obtainment of deliverance, which, as has been demonstrated above p. 104, comes only through meditation. Now and then we find texts dealing with the preparations for meditation, e. g. Brh. IV. 4. 23, Kāṭha II. 24. Sometimes we hear of the duties of the various stages of life and of the necessity of pursuing the duties just of one's proper stage (e. g. Maitri IV. 3). Kena 33 says comprehensively: "Austerity (*tapas*), restraint (*dama*), and work (*karman*) are the foundation of it (i. e. the doctrine, *upaniṣad*). The Vedas are all its limbs. Truth (*satya*) is its abode." Among the virtues we find here *karman*. That *karman* may be positively valued in this way, does not conflict with the fact that elsewhere it is despised. Works have a preparatory importance, but do not lead to final salvation.

A close study of the ethics of the Upaniṣads does not belong to our subject, however. As has been repeatedly stated, the question of which works are good and which evil has no direct relation to deliverance as this conception is expounded in these texts. It is of importance in the earlier stages of life, but not in the forest-stage. The forest-dweller is not concerned with such sins as are treated in the ritual texts. He leaves good and evil works behind, and finds deliverance in a world where such contrasts do not exist. Consequently, the Upaniṣads do not speak of deliverance from sin, but of deliverance from "all opposite pairs", such as good and evil works, birth and death.

<sup>88</sup> Outside the Upaniṣads treated in the present study, *enas* is met with in Mahānārāyaṇa-up. (JACOB, A concordance p. 269 f.).

## VII.

# CONCLUSION

I have come to the end of my study. My main points may be summed up as follows.

1. My interest has been concentrated on the question of salvation. As in Indian religions salvation is generally understood as the final deliverance from this worldly existence, it might be argued that in the Veda there are ideas of salvation only in the Upaniṣads, and that even in these texts such ideas are but little developed. I have taken "salvation" in a broader sense, in accordance with the original meaning of the Sanskrit terms for it: *mukti*, *mokṣa*. The verb *muñcati*, from which these terms are derived, is met with in all parts of the Veda, usually in the sense of delivering from some evil or other. These evils have been the subject of my investigation. Having many synonyms, *muñcati* is not used in any fixed terminology, by which the research might be restricted. Only gradually has *muñcati* become the central word for expressing deliverance from evil.

This questioning of the ideas of deliverance from evil implies a questioning of the very foundations of Vedic religion. I have been more interested in that which the various Vedic texts have in common than in that in which they have diverging opinions. I am well aware that the Veda does not contain any definite system and that the ideas met with in these texts are manifold and often contradictory. This does not exclude the fact, however, that various traits may be found to be common to the texts or at least to certain kinds of texts. Such funda-



mental ideas are met with not least with regard to the question of deliverance from evil.

2. When dealing with various kinds of evil and arranging them under certain heads, it has appeared most convenient to see the ideas against the background of the orthodox theories of the life of a Brahman. Scholars have generally given unsatisfactory attention to this point of view, being mainly interested in the historical evolution of various Vedic ideas. In the Veda the system of various stages of life has no fixed form, but the main point of it seems to be very ancient: the distinction between an active life in the village with ritual and social duties, and a meditative stage in the forests. According to this pattern the whole Veda has been arranged. *Samhitās* and *Brāhmaṇas* are concerned with the sacrifice and belong consequently to village life. With their texts, intended for meditations, the *Upaniṣads*, on the other hand, belong to the forest life. Now it is natural that in his social stage the Vedic man wants to be delivered from human and superhuman enemies, diseases, curses, etc. Such evils are often regarded as consequences of sin, but sin is also looked upon as a disease or an uncleanness in itself. Death in a premature age is feared, too, as well as a menacing recurring death in a new life. Death is good only as the normal death in old age, when all the duties of life have been performed. — In the meditative stage of life, the aspect of the evils of life changes. The evils threatening an ordered social life lose their importance, when the hermits abandon everything that belongs to such a life. In the *Upaniṣads* we find the hermits so highly absorbed by the positive ideas of *Ātman-Brahman*, however, that we do not hear much of the evils from which they want to be delivered. Death continues to be regarded as a central evil. Sometimes we hear of it also as a good thing leading to final salvation. When in Vedic times the idea of a cycle of existence is developed in ways that I have tried to trace, death becomes a moment in this cycle to those who have not found the delivering knowledge, but to the wise

man a passage to final salvation. This aspect of life as an evil and of death as a gate to deliverance appears mainly in those Upaniṣads, in which we may suppose an influence from Buddhism. In the forest stage of life, into which according to Vedic orthodoxy man shall enter only after having passed through the social stage, the hermit prepares himself for death, finding the Highest Good in something that is beyond both life and death. Desire, works and false knowledge are now the evil things that fetter man in this life of individuality. The typically Vedic words for sin are not used for these things, but they may be regarded as the forest-stage equivalents of them.

3. As I have just said, the distinction between a social stage of life and a meditative one seems to be very ancient. I think we may see it as a consequence of the meeting between Aryan and pre-Aryan civilization in India. Of the pre-Aryan civilization we have obtained some ideas through the excavations in the Indus valley. Scholars do not agree as to whether, when and how the Aryans met this culture. We do not know whether it has covered places and times for which the excavations have not given direct evidence, but probably this has been the case. I think we may suppose that the Aryans met this culture or at least a similar one when invading India. Materially, the Indus civilization stood on a very high level. On its spiritual features we are but little informed. In this sphere the most interesting find is a picture of a man who seems to sit in the position of a yogin. He has three faces and is surrounded by animals. From this find the conclusions seem to be justifiable that Siva (or his prototype) was known in pre-Vedic India and that the art of yoga was practised. We may venture the hypothesis that the Veda, in which meditation obtained a place in the texts intended for the last stage of life, inherited this art from pre-Aryan India. The archæological finds strengthen the belief, earlier advanced on other grounds, that Indian religion owes much to the pre-Aryan population of India. Even the Veda is a synthesis of Aryan and pre-Aryan elements. The

latter have been of importance not least for the Vedic ideas of salvation.

In no other part of the world can the religious history be followed so continuously as in India. Beginning with the religion of the Indus-people about 2500 B. C., we are able to follow the development of Hinduism through the Veda and so further on to this day. As long as we do not know more of pre-Vedic India, the Vedic system remains the foundation of Hinduism, however. Modern Hinduism cannot be understood apart from the Veda, even though these ancient texts are studied only by a minority among modern Hindus.

In India to-day a great religious struggle is going on. The main powers are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and modern Secularism. The three latter derive strength from their international character, Hinduism especially from its long indigenous history. Those interested in this struggle are obliged to find points of contact and of division, and this must be done through comparative studies. Such comparative studies must be preceded by studies of the single religions from such aspects as can be fruitful for comparisons. Such an aspect is the deliverance from evil, a question about which every religion has something to say.

# ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
Acta Or.	Acta Orientalia, Leyden.
AIA	Annual bibliography of Indian archæology, Leyden.
Arch. Or.	Archiv Orientální, Prag.
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft, Leipzig-Berlin.
AV	Atharvaveda Samhitā.
BARTHOLOMAE	BARTHOLOMAE, Altiranisches Wörterbuch.
Brh.	Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.
Chānd.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad.
CHI	The Cambridge history of India.
DEUSSEN AGP	DEUSSEN, Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie.
ERE	Encyclopædia of religion and ethics, ed. by HASTINGS.
Gen.	Liber Genesis.
GGA	Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen.
GRASSMANN WB	GRASSMANN, Wörterbuch zum Rigveda.
IA	The Indian antiquary, Bombay.
IC	Indian culture, Calcutta.
IHQ	The Indian historical quarterly, Calcutta.
IS	Indische Studien, herausgegeben von WEBER.
HOS	Harvard Oriental series, Cambridge Mass.
JA	Journal Asiatique, Paris.
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental society, New Haven.
JRAS	The Journal of the royal Asiatic society, London.
Kauṣ.	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad.
LUA	Lunds universitets årsskrift.
MO	Le monde oriental, Uppsala.
MS	Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā.
Muṇḍ.	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.
NIA	New Indian antiquary, Bombay.
NGG	Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.
OLZ	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung, Leipzig.
PW	Petersburger Wörterbuch (BÖHTLINGK-ROTH, Sanskrit-Wörterbuch).

RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions, Paris.
RV	Ṛgveda Saṁhitā.
SB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
SBE	The sacred books of the East, Oxford.
Śvet.	Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.
Taitt.	Taittirīya Upaniṣad.
TB	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.
TS	Taittirīya Saṁhitā.
UUA	Uppsala universitets årsskrift.
VS	Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā.
WALDE-POKORNY	WALDE, Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der indogermanischen Sprachen ... bearbeitet von POKORNY.
WHITNEY AV	Atharva-veda Saṁhitā translated ... by WHITNEY.
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.
YV	Yajurveda Saṁhitās.
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Leipzig.
ZII	Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik, Leipzig.

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